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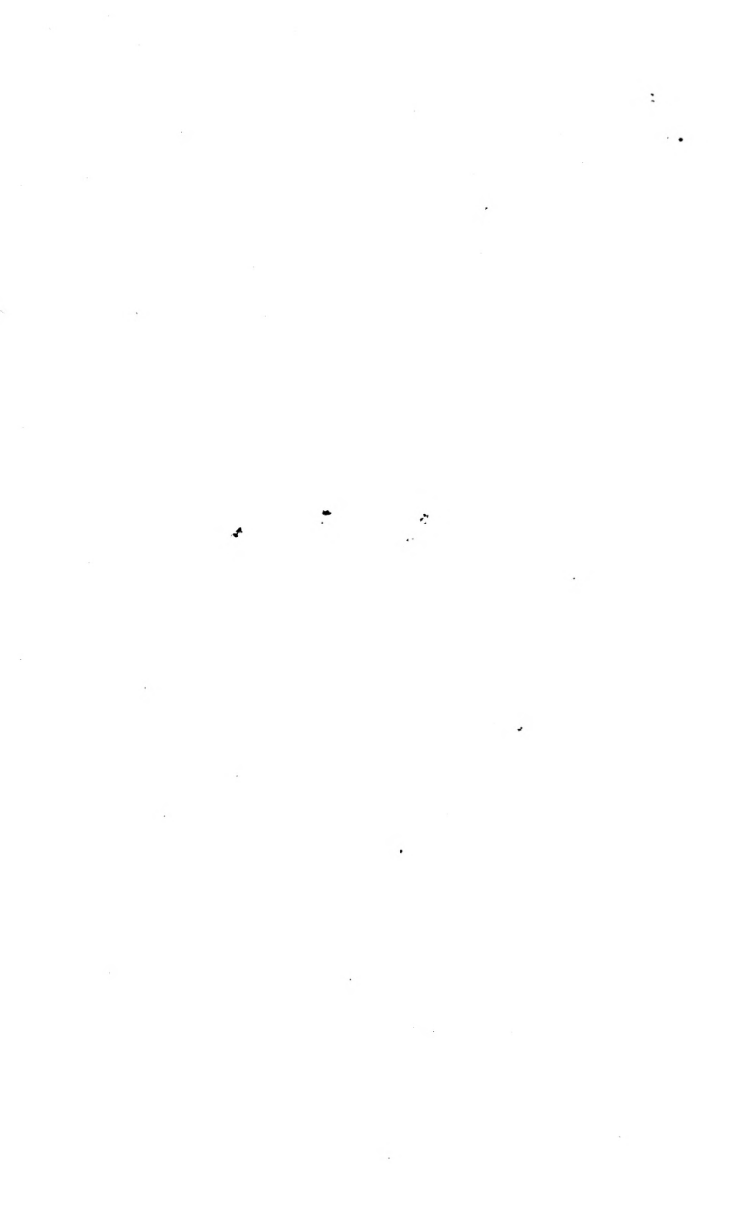
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THE
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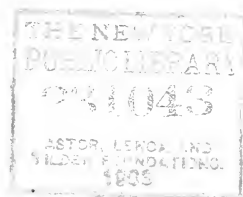
WILLIAM CECIL DUNCAN,

PASTOR OF THE "COLISEUM PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH," NEW ORLEANS;

AND AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE, CHARACTER, AND ACTS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST," AND THE
"HISTORY OF THE EARLY BAPTISTS"

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TO

The Ladies of New Orleans,

THOSE OF MY OWN CHURCH AND CONGREGATION, WITH ALL SUCH AS

“LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SINCERITY,”

This Volume

IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THEIR FRIEND

AND FELLOW-BELIEVER IN THE GOSPEL.

P R E F A C E .

THIS volume owes its origin to the wish of some of the ladies of my congregation. They desired that certain Pulpit Discourses with which they were specially pleased, should be put into a form suitable for general circulation. Accordingly, I have taken a number of the Sermons delivered in the regular course of my Sunday ministrations, and arranged them as they now appear in the "Ladies' Pulpit Offering." The Discourses are printed as they were spoken, with a few verbal alterations. Each Sermon is dedicated to that lady who has expressed herself more than usually pleased—one, for one reason; another, for another—with that particular Discourse. Of the ladies mentioned, twelve were baptized by myself; two came into the Church anew under my ministry; and one was received by letter from another organization.

I am well aware that a Discourse, when printed, loses much of the life which sprung from the animation of its delivery; still, I trust, that these Sermons will receive, in their present form, something of the favor from others which they met with from the people of my charge. I am encouraged to think that they will, by the pleasure with which a few, in whose taste and judgment I have confidence, have read them in manuscript. Certainly, the

subjects are not devoid of interest: and, if they are not treated in a manner that will please, while it instructs, the fault is mine.

Pulpit Discourses, I know, are not generally popular when printed; yet I hope that those whose eye may chance to fall on the "Offering," will not pass the book by, or cast it aside, without having first perused a portion of its contents sufficient to judge of its claims to further attention. If they choose to reject it then, let them reject.

I have attempted to present weighty thoughts in a graphic style; in which, it is hoped, I have to some extent succeeded. The Volume is meant for popular reading; and is so prepared as to make it a suitable "Gift Book" from friend to friend.

All the Sermons, except the last, were preached in the "Coliseum-place Baptist Church;" and no one of them was prepared with the previous thought of publication. The Notes—which, it is believed, will not be considered valueless—were written for this volume.

Such as they are, these Discourses are given to the people of my congregation, and to the world, in the hope that they may accomplish good. Some of them, God be thanked, have been already blessed. May they be blessed yet more abundantly; and may they perform the mission on which the author sends them with earnest prayers to Him from whom alone "the increase" comes.

W. C. D.

*New Orleans, Study of the Coliseum-place Baptist Church,
Tuesday Morning, 2d October, 1855.*

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TO

Miss Sarah A. Hollis,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 28, 1855,

THE FIRST WHO PROFESSED CONVERSION UNDER THE MINISTRATIONS
IN THE "COLISEUM-PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH;" THE AN-
NOUNCEMENT OF WHICH BROUGHT COMFORT TO
ONE THEN LANGUISHING ON A COUCH
OF ILLNESS AND PAIN.

DISCOURSE I.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN TO CHRIST.

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”—1 PETER, ii. 25.

THE Past comes up before me like a vision of the night. I see a picture somber with shades of darkness. Heavy clouds hang over it like a curtain; and only here and there a dim ray of light feebly penetrates the clustering gloom. I perceive a small company gathered together, and looking each at the other in sadness and despondency. Anon, I hear the low wail of lamentation: “By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.” Methinks I know that voice; methinks I recognize those sorrowful faces, upturned to Heaven, and wet with flowing tears. That grief-stricken company are the children of our own Zion, mourning over the desolation of our Jerusalem,

and sighing because of the broken walls and waste places of the Temple of our God!

It is a time of sadness and weeping. Our temple has been alienated, and has fallen into the hands of the stranger. The tabernacle of our God has departed from Israel; and her children, bereft of their inheritance, feel that they are dwelling in a foreign land. Their souls are downcast; and their voices are no longer able to sing the songs of Zion. Their harps of praise are hanged upon the willows; and they can utter only the accents of prayer and supplication.

The words of entreaty strike now upon my listening ear, coming forth amid subdued sobbing, from the lips of one whose knee is bent in suppliance before Jehovah. "Oh, Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt Thou be angry against the prayer of Thy people? Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure. Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves. Turn us again, oh God of Hosts, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

The prayer is a prayer of penitence: it is a prayer of faith. God hears it in Heaven, and

prepares to return it a speedy and gracious answer. Those stricken hearts are comforted; light breaks in upon their darkness, and they feel that, though they sorrow now, the King of Jerusalem will yet "Give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." They know and are sure now that God has not deserted them, that His mercy is not "clean gone forever;" and, in the warmth of their joy, they exclaim in spirit with Zacharias: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed His people. . . . The day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Brighter hues now overspread the picture: the curtaining clouds break away, and disperse. Its eastern^v border grows red with the rays of hope; and the gloomy darkness begins to flee before the rising sun of day.

Know you not the original of this picture? Know you not whose condition it is that I have described? I look around, and see now before me the faces of some whose features I beheld in that mournful vision of the past. But, not many

months ago, it was no vision: it was a sad reality; and some who are here to-day, were living, acting, characters in that scene of disappointment and grief. It was then the season of our desolation. Our temple was gone; and the ordinances of God's house were no longer administered. Only a few among us met regularly together for worship; and those few were moved by feelings of uneasiness and anxious forebodings. Almost all our Israel "was scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd;" and the few that were left, could do little more than sit down "by the rivers of Babylon," and weep when they "remembered Zion." The song of praise was hushed, the voice of the under-shepherd was silent, and his instructions and admonitions were heard no more.

Could the lamented Hinton—that laborious and self-sacrificing pastor who has gone from among us to his eternal reward—have been endowed, on his death-bed, with the prophetic spirit of Micaiah, when he prophesied, in old time, to Ahab and Jehoshaphat, and have seen, with prophetic eye, that the flock which he so faithfully tended would soon be scattered, and would wander away "through all the mountains,

and upon every high hill;" could he have foreseen that we all would go astray like lost sheep, and turn every one to his own way, how would his dying hours have been embittered, and what emotions of pain would have risen within him, and overclouded with sorrow the last recollections of his earthly existence. Happily for him, his sight did not penetrate into the future, and he perceived not the melancholy spectacle which our eyes have beheld—the flock which he so loved and nurtured "scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."*

I do not purpose to recount here the history of our people since the death of him to whom I have just alluded. We all know that it is a mournful one; and we know that, if we read it rightly, it will teach us many a monitory lesson of prudence, moderation, and self-restraint. But there are some scenes in it which I can not, even now, look back upon without feelings of mournfulness and pain; and I am sure that to point them to you to-day would only rouse up in your hearts memories which you would fain have buried in forgetfulness.

Our general condition may be truly described

* See Appendix, note A.

in the words of the Apostle Peter: We "were as sheep going astray." We had wandered, most of us, from Jesus, "the great Shepherd of the sheep;" and had "turned every one to his own way." Like Israel of old, we had become disobedient; we hearkened not to the wise counsels of God, but followed each the devices of his own heart; and so the Lord suffered us to be "scattered in the cloudy and dark day."

Are we not astonished and ashamed, when we recall to mind the period of our unhappy wandering? God had kindly spread out before us the rich pasture of His love. It was a vale covered with a green carpet of His own handiwork; and through it there flowed many a rippling brook which had its source in that exhaustless fountain which gushes forth in the celestial Paradise. Quiet and peace were ours. God, the Creator, was our Shepherd. God revealed Himself in the person of His Son. He invited us in winning tones of gentleness, to lie down in green pastures, and kindly essayed to lead us "beside the still waters." But we heeded not the call of the divine Shepherd: we listened not to His voice, beseeching us to come and be warmed in His bosom. The spirit of wandering arose in our

flock ; and a desire to walk in unforbidden and dangerous paths in search of contentment and happiness. Our first love waxed cold ; we slighted the good Shepherd, paying no attention to His warnings, and disregarding His mild admonitions. We sought other leaders to go before us into Canaan, and forgot the only true Saviour, who alone can guide our footsteps into the way of peace. Truly, we all, like sheep, went astray ; we “ turned every one to his own way,” wandering, in our folly, heedlessly and blindly, “ through all the mountains, and upon every high hill.” Oftentimes we fell into hidden pits ; and some were dashed to pieces by the fall. Hunger and thirst came upon us, and threatened us with destruction ; and we were forced to satisfy the one by feeding on the dry roots that grew scantily on the mountains, and to quench the other with the water that was stagnating in the crevices of the barren rocks.

Our little flock, once united, was almost wholly dispersed. Many of the sheep, yea, and the more tender lambs—the older and the younger members of the congregation—were scattered, and each wandered off in a road of his own. Some repaired to other and strange flocks, which fed

upon new and sometimes unhealthy pastures. Here they sought for nourishment, but they ate of food to which they were not accustomed ; food which, even if good for others, was not suitable for them ; and they drank, too often, of water that would not slake their thirst. Some strayed off into solitary and desert places, and lay down in the dens and dark caves of the mountains. They wished no longer to see the face of their Shepherd, and desired not to hear the moving utterances of His gentle voice. For them, all loveliness had fled from His countenance ; and they beheld no more in Him the perfection of manliness and beauty. Their souls, already starved into leanness, relished less and less the food which had been sent down from heaven ; and they would fain eat of the husks which the mountain swine had half devoured. They longed for life, but would not drink from the wells of salvation. They tried, but tried in vain, to quench their thirst at broken cisterns, that could hold no water.

I have spoken of the past somewhat after the manner of an allegory, describing, in a similitude, our condition as it was when we “were as sheep going astray.” You that know our late

history will readily understand the allusions, and will perceive that they portray the truth only too well. Oh! it was indeed a sad and mournful time; and the few sons and daughters of Zion that still were faithful amid her troubles, wept often, and prayed often, over the desolation of our Jerusalem; saying, "How long, oh, Lord; hast Thou cast us off forever? Will Thine anger always smoke against the sheep of Thy pasture? Remember, oh God, Thy congregation, which Thou hast purchased of old; the rod of Thine inheritance, which Thou hast redeemed. Arise, oh Lord, plead Thine own cause: bring back the wanderers to Thy fold; silence the clamors of Thine enemies; and rebuke the tumult of those that rise up against Thee, and against Thy people Israel." The presence of Jehovah seemed to be withdrawn from our Zion: the walls of our city had been thrown down, and the gates of our temple had been, as it were, consumed with fire. They that wished us ill, laughed at our calamity, and cried out in mockery, "Aha, aha! the hand of the destroyer is upon thee, and thy house shall be razed to its lowest foundation." The soul of the pious was torn with grief; it mourned over the decay of Jerusalem; and called often upon

the Lord, "Thou art our help and our deliverer ; make no tarrying, oh my God!"

It is well for us to bring back to our recollection the season of our sadness and desolation. True, the time of our calamities seems to have departed : for the Lord has deigned to look upon us in mercy. He has called us back from our wandering ; has lifted us from the pits into which we had fallen ; and has restored us to the pasture of "the good Shepherd," and to the joys of His salvation. But we are, by nature, "prone to wander, prone to leave the God we love ;" and need, therefore, to dwell frequently on the lessons of our bitter experience. Those days of darkness must not be forgotten ; and, if it be, as I trust it is, that God is now about to pour upon us abundant blessings from on high ; if the time of His indignation be indeed overpast ; if the light now shining in our eastern horizon is really to stream on in a perpetually increasing volume, and with a fuller, warmer, holier, flow ; if the black clouds of horror which once loomed so fearfully above our heads, but are now dispersing, are of a truth to break away, and flee from before the ever-brightening beams of "the Sun of Righteousness ;" if happiness so soul-comforting

as this is now indeed to shine in upon us, the recollection of the calamity that has departed, of the woes that are buried, of the tears that have ceased to flow, will serve to augment our present bliss, and open up to us in the future ever-gushing fountains of endless delight. Oh, if God has indeed "visited and redeemed His people," I would not blot from my memory one tint, however dark, in that sorrowful picture of the past; I would not soften, if I could, one of its more somber hues, or change, in aught, its harsh and gloomy outlines. I love it because it *is* a picture of the past; and I gaze upon it with such fond memories as move the staid and sober matron when she looks upon the infant portrait of her grown-up son. Would I retouch the picture of my departed mother, because she is now an angel-spirit in the heavenly Paradise? Oh, no: I wish to see her as she was on earth, in her state of imperfection, before her "mortal put on immortality." I wish to look upon her as I knew her, and to call to mind the memories of other times—days, it may be, of sorrow and of suffering, but days in which there were planted in the soul the germs of a new life that were to burst forth in all their beauty in eternity, and grow up into a

harvest of everlasting joy. It is good to have such memories; thoughts that come back to me like recollected music; thoughts that travel through the shadowy past, lift up its veil, and conjure up before me images of warning hope that point me to the skies.

My brethren, thank God that I say to you this morning, “Ye *were* as sheep going astray;” that I tell you not of present wandering, but of a time that is gone, I hope, forever. Even while we strayed away from the presence of our Shepherd, and involved ourselves, in our recklessness, in mountain passes which had no outlet, the mercy and the love of our God kept following us in the devious windings of our blind pathway; and His voice plead continually with us, “Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.” He called upon us often; and He called in many ways. At length, after straying long, we began to feel that we had forsaken the only source of happiness; to mourn over joys that had fled; to lament our coldness; to grieve on account of our desertion of a God so merciful, so kind, so compassionate, so ready to pardon. Our eyes looked back with longing to the pasture where once our soul had fed on food substantial:

and memory reimagined to itself "the still waters" where once we held such sweet communion with our God. Then it was that we saw and felt our deep ingratitude; and then it was that, subdued to repentance, we cried out, in a paroxysm of real grief—

"What better can we do, than, to the place
Repairing where He judges us, prostrate fall
Before Him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek."

And so we turned, each from the way in which he had wandered, and lifted up our faces toward the holy hill of Zion. The spirit of prayer was revived in our hearts; and the language of supplication trembled upon our lips. "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive: to us belong confusion of face, and shame, and penitent contrition; but with Thee are mercies and forgivenesses; with Thee there is abundant pardon, and with Thee plenteous redemption: oh, show us Thy mercy, and grant us Thy salvation." Again we sought the flock, and joined ourselves to the people of God. Darkness fled away, and light sprang up within

our souls. Never before looked "the good Shepherd" so lovely; never were we so glad at the sound of His voice; never saw we so mild a radiance beam forth from His compassionate eye; and never did we so long to receive from His own lips the assurance of His forgiveness and love. Our hearts thrilled with sensations before unknown, and, almost before we thought, we cried aloud—

"Jesus! I love thy charming name;
'Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That Earth and Heaven might hear."

Never had we so felt its magic power: 'twas life, and joy, and peace.

"Ye *were* as sheep going astray; but *are now* returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." About a year ago, we commenced our meetings in the Hall* from which we have just removed. We were few in number; but our strength increased from Sunday to Sunday. It pleased God to give us evidence of His gracious presence. I think I may say that the last has been with us a year of spiritual growth. The

* Hall of the Carrollton Railroad Dépôt, corner of Barronne and Perdido-streets.

brethren have been brought together into a closer and more cordial union than I have ever known to exist before. The Lord has met with us in our church assemblies, and in our meetings for prayer. There are those among us who could tell of many an hour of blest communion with the God of their salvation; for they have often felt, within the past twelve months, the dew of heaven descending upon their expectant souls. There are those who have returned from years of long wandering to "the Shepherd and Bishop" of their first affection; and who could testify this morning that never before have they felt the love of God shed abroad so copiously within their hearts. Sickness has been among us; but we have been enabled, even amid the clouds and darkness, to praise and adore Him from whom all our blessings flow. Our fold has been enlarged by accessions from the world; repentant souls that longed for Heaven, and rested not until they found peace in believing, and purged their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. The Holy Spirit has moved among us; and we have seen Him, with our inward eye, knocking at the sinner's heart for admittance, and have heard Him say, in the

winning words of Christ, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Some have yielded, have followed their Lord into the waters of baptism. Others have resisted; but they still live to taste of God's mercy, and they still hear the Gospel invitation, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come: let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

May I not say this morning, my brethren, that ye are each returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls? May I not comfort my heart with the reflection that the time of our wandering is past; and that we are all now joined in a new and enduring union to Christ? Oh, if I thought that the lessons of by-gone days have been taught us in vain; that the time will come when we shall again stray from the fold of our Heavenly Shepherd; if I feared, for a moment, that the harmony which now reigns among us will ever hereafter be broken in upon by discord and distraction, I should not have the courage to stand before you to-day, nor should I dare venture to assume the responsibility—heavy enough as it is, even in this the day of our dawning prosperity—of becoming your under-shepherd,

and of attempting under Christ, to guide you and aid you in your heavenward journey. But I have no such fears. I believe that a day has dawned on our Zion, the brightness of which shall go on increasing; that the well-spring of our new-found happiness will gush forth in streams which shall continue to refresh and make glad the city of our God. This conviction is as oil to my heart; for I believe that Jehovah will carry on the work which He has begun until it shall come to perfection, and until it shall shine forth all radiant with heavenly beauty and glory. My soul tells me that this is the Lord's doing; and it is marvelous in my eyes.

For all this, we must not be over-confident. It is with fear and trembling that we have to work out our own salvation, even though we know that God is working within us "to will and to do according to His good pleasure." If we wish to be strong indeed, we must "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might;" if we hope to come off victorious in our hard world-struggle, we must "put on the whole armor of God," remembering that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this

world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Let us be careful, then, that we rely not upon our own strength, but only on the might and power of our God.

You have "returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." See to it that ye wander no more. Unite yourselves to Him now by a new and living faith—a faith which nothing can destroy or disturb; which will stand unshaken amid adversity and trouble, and come forth uncorrupted from the still more dangerous trials of prosperity. Keep near to Christ. Do this as you should, and you can never fall away. Keep near Him by faithful attendance upon the ordinances and worship of His house: keep near Him by prayer, both private and with your families: keep near Him by study and meditation on the Word of God.

In particular, I would charge you, as Paul did Timothy, to "give attendance unto reading"—the reading of the Scriptures. Living, as we do, amid the hurry, and confusion, and multiplied engagements, of a commercial city, we are tempted to devote to other pursuits—too often to mere amusement—the time which we should spend in studying and pondering the teachings

of the New Testament. This tendency we must resist; and learn to resort as regularly to the perusal of the Scriptures as to our daily business avocations. The instructions of the good Shepherd—of Him who gave His life for His sheep—are written out in full in the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And we must by no means neglect them; for they alone can lead us to eternal life. It is my firm belief that a praying church, and a Bible-reading church, can never be thrown into confusion, and can never be disunited from Christ its living Head. No instance to the contrary can be pointed out in all the long history of Christianity. Here, then, is a safeguard for our protection. On this let us repose our trust. Let us look to the Bible as the guardian of our safety, and, whether sunshine or gloom, the storm or the calm, the beauty and wealth of Spring, or the nakedness and desolation of Winter, may be our portion—guided by its precepts, supported by its encouragements, and cheered by its promises, our communion shall be unbroken on earth, and cemented beyond all power of dissolution in eternity.

If we have indeed returned to Christ, let us

henceforth strive to be one with Him in His death and in His life. If we truly desire to be united to Him, we shall make all His interests our own. Between Jesus and the sincere believer "there is not only attachment, but fellowship; not only correspondence, but affinity." The souls of the two "not only meet, but spontaneously clasp each other; there is not only reciprocal attraction, but approach is lost in union." The heart of each beats responsive to the heart of the other; and the spiritual life-current of the two meet and mingle into one. Such a union must we each seek for, if we would indeed be raised with Christ from the dead, and walk with Him in newness of life. And it is a union which we can each attain; for the love of Christ itself constraineth us, and draweth us, while we utter glad responses of lively thankfulness and praise. There is every thing in His character to awaken our admiration; every thing in His work to excite our gratitude; every thing in His life to draw us toward him, as the magnet is turned to the pole; every thing in His precepts to establish them in our minds and hearts, as the perfect law of liberty and love.

Some politician has said "Eternal vigilance is

the price of liberty;" and this half-truth, when spoken of freedom in a worldly government, is a whole-truth, when applied to the liberty which is ours in the kingdom of Christ. "Incessant watchfulness" must be our maxim, if we would keep securely that which God has given us, till the Last Day. We must be on our guard against the wiles of Satan: we must watch against the temptations of our own passions, "for the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked." But our watching, and guarding, and resisting, will be in vain, unless we be directed by the counsels of Jesus, the heavenly Bishop. He alone is the source of our wisdom and of our strength. To Him, then, let us look for aid; and let us so live that our being may be absorbed in the depths of His being, and our life be "hid with Christ in God."

If Jesus is not yet wholly ours, oh, let us make Him wholly ours now. He is the source and center of all minds. Look where we will, He is still not only in us, but before us. The wisdom of our intellects, so far as they are wise—the goodness of our natures, so far as they are good—"the purposes of our wills and desires—the calmness of our consciences—the hopes and

expectations of our souls and bodies—the liberty from law and sin—whatever it is, in or about us, which we either know, or admire, or enjoy, or expect, He, Jesus, is the treasury whence they were taken, the fullness whence they were received, the head by which they are transferred to us, the hand by which they are bestowed.” On all sides are we compassed, and even hedged in, so to speak, with His blessings. We are blind, then, if we do not see Him; deaf, if we do not hear Him; ungrateful and wrong-hearted, if we do not listen to His call. And yet, I fear me, that there are some here to-day who receive all these mercies from Jesus, and, never, or but seldom, and then so coldly, raise their hearts to Him, in thanksgiving and gratitude. They look in wonder on the streams of blessing which flow down upon them, and fill them with plenteousness, but never uplift their eye to the Source and fount whence all their mercies flow. Oh, my soul, be it not so with thee. Look up in glad thankfulness to thy Saviour and thy God. Know and confess that He is the author of all thy joy, the head and origin of all thy blessings. Mount up toward Him in heavenly contemplation, and, as thou soarest, pray—

“Fountain of light and living breath,
Whose mercies never fail nor fade,
Fill me with life that hath no death;
Fill me with light that hath no shade;
Appoint the remnant of my days
To see Thy power, and sing Thy praise.”

If we each be rightly united to Christ, we will also be united to one another, for Jesus will form the common link of our connection. The union which now exists among ourselves—for which I most devoutly thank God—must be preserved with the utmost vigilance and care. The Church of God is composed of many members of various talents and various acquirements; but let us never forget, even for a moment, that they are all “one in Christ Jesus.” We are “one body, quickened by one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.” We who have been buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, have “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” To each of us is imparted a gift, which we are to improve, not for our own gratification, but for the upbuilding of the Church of God. As Christ has given us grace, so are we to labor altogether for the advancement of His cause in our own hearts, and in the outward world; endeavoring, as we labor, “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

This, brethren—and I speak to Baptists in profession, and Baptists in sentiment—is our mission in New Orleans; to build up a church for God in this city, by coming together ourselves, and by bringing others, to hear the Word of God in the regular dispensations of God's house, and to devise and execute plans for the more speedy and successful prosecution, among this people, of the work whereunto we have all been called in Christ Jesus. This, I say, is our mission, and we must each (I make no exception) fulfill it, "till we all"—the whole Church of to-day and the future—"come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Let the same mind be in us, fellow-believers in the Gospel that was in Jesus, and let us never forget His dying charge—"These things I command you, *that ye love one another.*" A united church will be a conquering church, for love is the principle which is destined to overcome the world, and bring it prostrate to the feet of Him who is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." "God over all, blessed forever." Stand fast, then, in the love and peace of the Gospel.

Throw one arm round the Saviour, and the other round the brethren, and move on with them to Heaven in a united, affectionate, and sympathizing band.

“Be kind to each other, through weal and through woe,
For there’s many a sorrow to hearts here below;
But storms of this life beat around us in vain
If we are kind to each other, in pleasure and pain.”

My dear brethren, I have looked forward with strange longings to this day. I have labored, and I have prayed for its arrival; and now that it has come, I can not tell whether I should smile or weep.” You understand my feelings, I know; for the same. I doubt not, are at work in your own breasts. I behold those around me who are familiar with the history of our past; forms that I have seen bowed in prayer when our Zion was desolate, and eyes that I have seen filled with tears when looking upon the ruin of our Jerusalem. But one is wanting—one who has borne with a stout heart the heat and burden of the day. Oh, that he were present this morning, that he might gaze with us upon the walls of our new temple, and might lift up with us the voice of adoration and praise.*

* Mr. James H. Low, deacon of the “Coliseum-place Baptist Church,” to whose self-sacrificing spirit and indefatigable labors the Baptists of

Brethren, ye that mourned for long over the desolation of God's house, and you, ye daughters of Zion, that once hung your harps so pensively upon the willows, has not Jehovah answered your prayer? is He not now redeeming the promise which He spake unto you by the mouth of the prophet: "The Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places, and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody." Oh God, we thank Thee, Thou restorer of our joy. "Awake, put on thy strength, oh Zion. . . . Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of the city; for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem."

our city are indebted for the so speedy erection of so noble an edifice. Had he not vouchsafed his interposition and aid, it is impossible to tell when the building would have been erected, *if ever*; nor how ill-suited it might have been, when completed, to the wants of our denomination in the emporium of the South-West. Mr. Low had not returned from a health-seeking journey to the North when this opening Sermon was preached in the lecture-room of the new church.

TO

Mrs. Maria L. Low,

ADMITTED BY LETTER, DECEMBER 27, 1854,

ONE WITH WHOM MANY A MOMENT HAS BEEN PASSED IN FRIEND-
SHIP, AND FROM WHOM ABUNDANT ACTS OF KINDNESS
HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, WHEN KINDNESS, BEING
MOST NEEDED, WAS MOST GRATEFUL
TO THE HEART.



DISCOURSE II.

SOUL-REVIEW OF THE PAST.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”

PSALM, ciii. 2.

It is a time for reflection. The shades of night have gathered round us, and we have met in this quiet hall to hold communion with our God. The busy world without is hushed to rest, and all within is calm and still, save the feverish throbbings of our own hearts. The Spirit of Jehovah is hovering above us, brooding, with wing dipped in celestial dew, over the quiet silence of our soul.

The image of the buried Past uprises from the grave, and moves before us, with ghost-like tread, along our temple-aisles. With solemn step, and slow, it walks on silent feet across the floor, casting, as it passes by, many a melancholy look and many a reproachful glance upon the con-

gregation that have met together here. Its face is partly covered, but eyes of sorrow, dripping wet with tears, are plainly visible, and a brow so mournful that he who sees its sad expression feels within a pang of woe.

That sorrowing form that moves with solemn tread and weeping eye along our quiet aisles, is the spirit of the departed Year, come back from its tomb to reprove us for our forgetfulness of all its mercies, and for ingratitude to Him, who, for yet another twelvemonth, hath redeemed our life from destruction, and crowned us with loving-kindness and tender-mercies. Who among us feels not that the reproof is just? The heart of whom does not tell him that he has been, and is now, guilty of ingratitude to a kind, and gracious, and affectionate God?

There are some here, who, while they can not but mourn over their short-comings, are, nevertheless, unfeignedly thankful for the mercies which Jehovah has vouchsafed them during the past twelvemonth, and who, in view of His kindness, can say with sincere lips, in words leaping forth from a glad, and happy, and grateful bosom, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." To them, the thought that the

spirit of the Past is present to-night, noting down their feelings, wishes, and hopes, calls up in their mind, when glancing over the year that is fled, not so much mournful images of sorrow as bright and smiling images of happiness and joy. In the silence of their hearts they thank God for what He has done for them in days gone by, and, knowing His goodness and loving-kindness, they look upon blessings received as a pledge of blessings yet to be conferred—as the first-fruits of every needed temporal good, and the earnest of that heavenly inheritance which is “incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.”

There are others here, however, who never have, and, it may be, do not now, call upon their souls to praise and bless Jehovah, for all the benefits which they have received from Him with thankless heart, during the year that has gone forever. Nay, more—they not only will not bless Him for all His kindnesses, but will not thank Him for one—a single one—of His merciful benefits. Oh, thou perverse human heart; oh, ungrateful soul, steeped in sinfulness, and blinded by wickedness, and madness, and folly! Look around thee, and within thee. Tell me who it is that daily lights up the heavens to give thee

the sunshine of pleasure; and who is it that nightly hangs out the lamps of the sky to shed down the silvery beams of peace and happiness upon thy thankless soul? It is thy God, oh ingrate; the same Jehovah that gives thee life, and strength, and all things richly, for thy enjoyment; the same kind Providence that sends the warm blood in healthful gushes throughout every limb and member of thy frame; the skillful Physician who, when thou art ill, healeth thy diseases, and cureth all thine infirmities; the same merciful God who hath, in His long-suffering and patience, often called thee to repentance, and again, to-night, makes thee the offer of salvation, saying to thee, and to all that are perishing every where: "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

It is over thee, ungrateful disbeliever, ungrateful despiser and rejecter of "the grace of God which bringeth salvation"—it is over *thee*, backsliding Christian, thou recreant to thy duty to God, to thy brethren, and to thy fellow-man—that the Spirit of the past Year is weeping tears

of blood, as he moves with solemn tread along these stilly aisles, and draws around him, with mournful countenance, and a look so sad, so piercing, so heart-breaking, the ghost-like drapery and gloomy ceremonies of the grave. Ah, methinks I see him lift his withered finger, and, looking full on thee, point, with solemn air, down to the wailing dungeons of the lost. It is a note of warning. Heed thou the timely admonition. Anon, he raises his skeleton hand, and points thee upward to the throne of God. His tearful eye is lit up for a moment with a ray of hope; and around his wasted features there plays, for an instant, a smile such as angels wear, flashing forth, for one bright second, like summer lightning gleaming, at set of sun, along the western sky. His lips are parted, and move as if about to speak; and, oh! if he *could* find a voice, I know that beckoning Spirit would thunder in thine astonished ears the note of awful warning, "What meanest thou, oh sleeper; arise, and call upon thy God!" Wilt thou heed this admonition; or wilt thou still persist in iniquity? Life and death are again set before thee. Choose life, and thou shalt fear nothing for the Past. Choose death, and the Spirit which warns thee

to-night, shall brood over thee in fearfulness forever; and the ravenous talon of remorse shall tug evermore at the bleeding, quivering, pulses of thine heart.

How many of us, now present, remember with gratitude *all* the benefits received last year from Jehovah? I may safely answer: "Not one." Some of us can call to mind unusual and striking favors, or such as are vouchsafed us daily in the regular dispensations of a benignant Providence. For these we are thankful. But very many of the benefits bestowed upon us by our indulgent Father, have slipped all together from our recollection; and we shall think of them no more until memory is quickened in eternity. But there are some here to-night, I fear me, who would bless God for none, *not one*, of His many benefits. Their heart is callous, completely hardened, it may be, to every feeling of gratitude for the mercies showered down upon them unceasingly from heaven. They are grateful to their fellow-men for every act of kindness; but not one throb of thankfulness stirs their bosom for the superabounding favors which they daily receive from their divine Creator and Benefactor.

The very brute shall teach thee reason, unre-

flecting man. The ox knoweth his owner, and loves him : the horse recognizes his master, and follows his guidance whithersoever he may lead : the hound licks the hand of him that feeds him, and crouches in lowly submission at his feet. But thou, oh thoughtless and perverse, wouldst dash away the arm of Him that would defend thee ; and then, stirred to anger at His kindling ire, wouldst hurl the gauntlet of defiance in His face. Thou wilt fret and fume at the trials and temporary ills of life ; and, overlooking its far more numerous blessings, wilt complain of the Providence who hath ordered all things so wisely and so well. There are minds which have become so misdirected by sin that they seize, with vice-like tenacity, upon the ills and woes of this mortal existence—those trials which, I doubt not, form, by God's will, no small part of the sterner discipline of life—and make them a ground of complaint against the justice and goodness of God ; not knowing, or not willing to know, that these are links, and important links, in the great chain of Providence which so ruleth and directeth the affairs of this world that all men may, at last, through penitence and faith, and trials and sufferings, be made meet to be

partakers of the heavenly inheritance. Art thou one of these objectors; and wouldst thou thus, hyena-like, feed upon the bloated carcass, when healthful flesh, well cooked and seasoned, is plenteous all around? Get thee, I pray, a human appetite; and feed thee, as thou mayest, on viands which shall nourish, not thy body only, but thy soul.

We have all had another year of probation. The time was given us to make preparation for eternity. Most of us have had health; and all of us have had friends, and the comforts and joys of social intercourse. Some have had an over-abundance of this world's goods; and all have had our necessary wants supplied. Our lives have been spared; and, though some of us may have lost a wife, a husband, a parent, or a child, *we* are yet alive to profit by the harsh but necessary lesson taught us by the heaven-sent monitor, Death. All have enjoyed the privileges of God's sanctuary; and have, perhaps, felt often within us the movings and stirrings of the Holy Spirit, sweetly drawing us to God. Goodness and mercy have showered down upon us, from a full basket, the roses of life; and, wreathing their choicest flowers

into a crown of loving-kindness, have circled our temples with plenteousness and peace.

All this, and more, hath Jehovah done for *us*. What have we done for *Him*? Ask yourselves this question, each of you. Happy are ye, if you have not abused eternal love, whence all your blessings flow. If you have slighted God's mercies, if you have not remembered His benefits, it is high time to turn to Him, and ask Him to mold your hearts afresh. We have entered upon a new year. Let us all profit by the past. Toward our heavenly Father we have often, the best of us, been ungrateful; we have been unkind. Let us seek the Lord to-night with a new heart, with new and firmer resolutions to live to the honor and glory of our Heavenly King.

“Let past ingratitude
Provoke our weeping eyes;
And hourly, as new mercies fall,
Let hourly thanks arise.”

Those who remember the benefits received from God, and use them for self-improvement, shall be blest. Those who forget them, and persevere in sin against a kind and merciful Sovereign, shall suddenly be cut off, and that without remedy. Life is the golden opportunity granted

to every man to make his peace with God. Each day has its twelve hours of labor ; and then cometh the night, when no man can work. He who spake as never man spake, whose every word was wisdom, gives us a timely warning : “ Walk, while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” This, the new year, is a new period of probation—a new season of providential leadings, and of Gospel privileges—a new day of light from above, shed around us and within us, from “ the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” If we are to work out our salvation at all, we must do it while it is day ; for, when darkness cometh, we shall stumble, and fall into perdition.

Whether we work or not, whether we improve it or not, the period of our probation is passing away. Another year has just opened, but it, like those which have been before it, will soon be numbered with the ages beyond the flood. And each of us is borne along upon its swelling tide.

“ Our lives are gliding free
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,
The silent grave !
Thither all earthly pomp and boast
Roll, to be swallowed up and lost
In one dark wave.”

The night of death is hastening on. Satan is busy deceiving us meanwhile ; whispering to each of us, as he whispered so falsely, ages since, to “the mother of all living,” “Thou shalt not surely die.”

Perhaps he is telling thee now, impenitent man, “This year shall be as the last with thee : thou shalt have opportunities, and much more abundantly : 'tis time enough for reformation ; put it off yet longer, and delight thee, for another season, with the pleasures and joys of earth.” Knowest thou not that Satan has been a liar from the beginning ; and that millions, heeding his tempting wiles, have sinned away forever their day of probation, and sunk at last to endless ruin ? Perhaps thou art strong and healthy. God can bring sickness upon thee in a moment ; or He can slay thee suddenly by the hand of violence. Perhaps thou art young, and sayest in thine heart, “The year is all mine own : the sun is bright above me ; and I fear not that darkness will come.” Dost thou forget that, not long since, thou didst see stretched before thee, breathless and lifeless, the stiffening corpse of thy young companion ; and that, beside that clay-cold form, around which thou hadst often twined in sweet

embrace the arms of friendship, thou didst sob in heart-felt agony, and weep that one so loved, so lovely, should be called to die? What, then, is man, however young, whose days are as grass; who, "as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Oh, say not, then, any of you, "We shall not die this year;" for ye know not when the Son of Man may come. You are all too familiar with the acts of death not to know that he comes alike to all; that his sweeping scythe mows down, without favor, the old, the middle-aged, the young; and that, with unsparing hand, he knocks alike at the gate of the palace, and at the door of the hut. You are all familiar with his dreaded presence; for visit you he will, whether welcome or not. You have all

"Felt the sound of the funeral chant,
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and slow,
And the sobs of the mourners, deep and low;
The weary sound, and the heavy breath,
And the silent motions of passing death;
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and dank,
Sent through the pores of the coffin-plank."

Sick at heart, you have followed the corpse to

the grave; and, as you moved sadly along in the slow procession, something within you has said, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." Your own and every other heart was very solemn. The powers of the world to come were on you there:

"The dark grass, and the flowers among the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did pass;
From their sighs the wind caught a mournful tone,
And sate in the pines, and gave groan for groan."

But your destiny may be fixed, by your own perverseness, long before the angel of Jehovah shall summon you to judgment. An offended God may give you over to blindness even before the sun of life has set. He that trifles with his opportunities shall have them withdrawn: he that rejects admonitions, and disregards warnings, shall be left alone in his wickedness; and he shall be allowed to go on in his amusements, in his folly, in his silly pursuit of trifles and empty nothingness, while the clouds, all unseen, are gathering around him, and the red right hand of Jehovah is already collecting strength to lanch at his head the thunderbolt of everlasting destruction. The time of his doom is hurrying

on; and he, perhaps, even untouched by a feeling of uneasiness, and thoughtless of danger—at the very moment when he thinks the sun of his prosperity is shining with most effulgent beam—shall suddenly be startled by the voice of the Judge, proclaiming in tones of fearfulness, “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness!” And the ministers of God’s flaming vengeance shall take him, and hurl him, bound hand and foot, into the gulf of perdition.

“Cast him into outer darkness!” And what a darkness! The bright sun shall be extinguished; the stars will “wander darkling in the eternal space, rayless and pathless;” and “the icy earth” will swing “blind and blackening in the moonless air.” Morn will come, and go; and come, and bring no day. Man will look up “with mad disquietude on the dull sky, the pall of a past world; and then again with curses cast him down upon the dust, and gnash his teeth, and howl.” Rivers, lakes, and oceans, all shall stagnate; “and nothing stir within their silent depths.” The waves will die; the tides will cease to flow; the clouds will flee away; the winds will wither in the stagnant air; and darkness—darkness palpable, terrible, black, appall-

ing, lit up with fitful flashes from the flames within—will hang forever, brooding with funereal wing, over the gloomy land of Night Eternal.

Thy neglected opportunities will rise up and haunt thee, sinful man, in the day of judgment. Think of them. “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.”

“Silence hath a tongue; the grave,
The darkness, and the lonely waste, have each
A tongue, that ever say: ‘Man! think of God!
Think of thyself! think of eternity!’
‘Fear God,’ the thunders say; ‘Fear God’ the waves;
‘Fear God,’ the lightning of the storm replies;
‘Fear God,’ deep loudly answers back to deep.
And in the temple of the Holy One
Messiah’s messengers—the faithful few,
Faithful ’mong many false—the Bible open
And cry, ‘Repent, repent, ye sons of men!
Believe; be saved:’ and reason awfully
Of temperance, righteousness, and judgment soon
To come—of ever-during life and death.”

And yet, up to this night, thou hast not believed. Angels have implored thee to cease from sin: Mercy has besought thee with tearful eye: “Heaven smiled and frowned: Hell groaned: Time fled: Death shook his dart, and threatened to make repentance vain.” And, notwithstand-

ing all, thou art still hurrying on to ruin—speeding thy way with arrowy haste, in spite of all reproof, “o’er mercy and o’er judgment,” down, and ever down, to endless woe.

I see a wan and spectral figure standing, in mid-winter’s bleakest night, on the verge of his new-dug grave. He is weeping there, with a wasted body, a desolate soul, a breast full of poison, and a heart stung with remorse. It is a man whose day of probation is ended; and who now is called to take his place among the silent dead. His grave is filled with dropping poison; and forth from out its gloomy mouth there come the sound of serpents hissing and the stifling smell of sultry vapor. As he looks down into the yawning pit, a convulsive shudder darts across his frame; and, with a voice of anguish inexpressible, he cries aloud, “Oh, Father, give me back the season of my hope: give me back my span of life, that I may make a wiser choice!” The heavens look down as if with sorrow; but they return no answer. The earth lies calm and quiet; and it gives him no reply. He looks above; he looks below—but there comes to him never a word. Covering his face with his hands, he bursts forth once more in deep soul-agony; while

a thousand burning tears trickle through his trembling fingers. "Come back, oh season of my youth and hope: return, return, once more!" He pleads in vain: his tears fall not in Mercy's sight. The time of his trial is over. It will *never, never, come again*: it is gone forever: *gone, gone, GONE.*

TO

Mrs. Sarah R. Randolph,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 14, 1855,

THE FIRST LADY THAT ENTERED THE WATERS OF THE FONT IN
THE COLISEUM-PLACE CHURCH, AND WHO, PREVIOUSLY
ATTACHED TO ANOTHER COMMUNION, FOUND
HAPPINESS IN YIELDING OBEDIENCE TO
THE COMMAND AND EXAMPLE
OF HER LORD.



DISCOURSE III.

PETER'S DENIAL OF CHRIST.

“Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?”—JOHN, xviii. 26.

SOMETHING more than eighteen centuries ago, the house of the high-priest in Jerusalem was the scene of strange events. It was night; and the air without was damp and wet with dew. A fire was burning in the open court; and around it was gathered a mixed crowd of servants, and soldiers, and visitors. The loud laugh and rude jest passed round; but there were present two persons in that motley assemblage who had no heart for merriment. The heat that warmed their bodies, could not drive the chill from off their souls; and though to outward sight they held their hands with seeming satisfaction over the genial blaze, a cold shiver of apprehension was creeping along their agitated breasts, and

curdling the life-current in their sluggish veins. They feared not so much for themselves as for their Master, their Teacher, their Spiritual Shepherd and Guide.

In a side room, not far distant from where they stood, and in full view, perhaps, of every eye, that loved Teacher was arraigned, a fettered captive, before the bar of the High-priest Caiaphas. He was being insulted and mocked; and the high-priest was striving to condemn Him on a false charge of blasphemy, sustained by perjured witnesses. As He stood there so calmly before the haughty man of power, and, gave His answers so meekly to every question, those two trembling disciples turned a listening ear to every word, and watched with painful anxiety, now with hope, and now with fear, the progress of that unrighteous examination. They had thought, perhaps, before they entered the courtyard of the high-priest's house, that their Master, so unjustly apprehended, would be acquitted of every charge, and soon be freed again. They now saw otherwise, and hope died away within their disappointed breasts.

Need I tell you that the captive of whom I speak was Jesus of Nazareth; and that those two

anxious disciples were John and Simon Peter? They had followed Jesus as He was led away, after His arrest, first to Annas, and then to his son-in-law Caiaphas; and, being admitted at the court-yard by a damsel whom John knew, had joined the group that was gathered around a cheerful "fire of coals." Thence they watched in silence the progress of the trial of Jesus, as it went on near them, in one of the apartments communicating with the open hall.

I have said that these two trembling disciples feared for their Master rather than for themselves. But one of the two was ill at ease, even when he thought of his own condition. Temptation had met him already, and conquered his wavering virtue; for when the maiden gate-keeper, approaching the fire where he stood warming himself, had asked him, "Art thou not one of this man's disciples?" he had answered "I am not." That falsehood lay heavy on his soul. He dared not look his companion in the eye for very shame; but hung his head in silence while thoughts of bitterness fed upon his heart.

The night was rolling away, when John left Peter alone, and sought the room in which the trial of his Master was going on. Drawing near,

he soon forgot the companion he had left behind, in deep solicitude for the dearer friend on whose breast he had often reclined in the tenderness of love. Peter, oppressed with anxious care, and fearing to be questioned yet more closely, had fled to the fore-court of the high-priest's house; and there interrogated by a second maiden, he denied again that he was a follower of Jesus.

An hour passed by; and Peter is seated once more beside the genial blaze. Again he is accused of being a disciple of the captive Nazarene; and another falsehood is added to the burden of his guilt. And he wickedly confirms his denial by an oath; declaring before high Heaven, "I know not the man." Numerous questions now pressed the recreant Apostle hard, saying, some of them, "Surely, thou *art* one of His disciples; for thy speech—thy Galilean accent betrayeth thee;" and one of their number—a kinsman of him whose ear Peter had, not long before, smote off with fiery sword—gave him a home-thrust, when he inquired, with mocking tone, "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?" The terrified Peter, driven to desperation, turned like a wounded stag at bay. He would have braved out even this attack, facing his accuser with fresh

denials; but, while he was yet speaking—while the oath of self-imprecation was yet hot upon his lips —“immediately the cock crew.” That sound fell like a funeral knell upon his guilty soul. Peter was filled with horror, and remorse seized with giant grasp upon his repenting heart: for just then, at the very moment chanticleer announced the dawn, Jesus turned and cast a glance so sorrowful, so reproachful, upon the conscience-struck apostate, that he at once relented; and, going forth from out the hall, wept tears of bitterness and woe.

In the brief description just given, I have made the house of Caiaphas the scene of Peter's denial of Christ. It may, however, have occurred—and, if the opinion of some leading modern biblical critics, based on the representation of John's Gospel, be true, it *did* occur in the residence of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. If this be the fact, the look of reproach which stung Peter to the soul, was cast upon him by Jesus as He was led through the open hall of Annas's house, on His way to His examination before Caiaphas and the Jewish sanhedrim. Following the crowd that passed with Jesus out of the court-yard gate, the conscience-stricken

apostle went forth, with hanging head and aching heart, into the open street; and there, as he reflected upon the too prophetic words of his Master, spoken but a few hours ago, "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice," he covered his face with his hands, "and wept bitterly.*"

What a lesson of warning have we here! Simon Peter, the boldest, the most self-confident, and withal one of the most favored of the disciples of Jesus, denies his Lord at the very first temptation. He had been early called as an apostle: he had been one of the happy trio—Peter, James, and John—whom Jesus had taken into His closest fellowship. He had heard for years his divine Teacher's godlike sermons, and had seen the perfection of piety radiant in His every act: he had beheld his Master transfigured in glory on the holy mount, and had heard the voice of the Father, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" he had received with special emphasis the apostolic commission to regulate the affairs of the Kingdom of Christ upon earth—being assured that upon him, as a rock, the Messiah would build His Church.

* See Appendix, note B.

And yet this apostle, so highly honored, denied his Master at the very first temptation; declaring with oaths and maledictions, "I know not the man."

But this was not all. Only a few short hours before Peter had been specially warned of his danger. Jesus had told him that Satan had cast a look of envy and hatred upon him, and desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat. When the Lord, just before instituting the ordinance which so beautifully commemorates His sufferings and death, had foretold the twelve that they all should desert Him that very night, and be scattered as sheep without a shepherd, Peter, with his usual ardor, had declared, "Though all shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." He had gone still further, and said, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison and to death." Hasty promise; no sooner made than utterly forgotten! Jesus knew the heart of His impetuous disciple far better than he knew it himself; and, therefore, in the very face of all his protestations, He said to him still: "Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me." And so he did; thrice

disowning his dearest friend, and meanly saying, when charged with being His disciple, "I know not the man."

"Know not the man! Oh, Peter, unthankful, ungrateful apostate; Satan hath surely sifted thee now! Knowest thou not thy Saviour and thy God? Who called thee from thy fishing-boat upon the Sea of Galilee, and made thee a fisher of men; and at whose feet was it, oh man of treacherous memory, that thou didst then, oppressed with fear and wonder, prostrate thyself, and cry aloud—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, oh Lord!" Who was it that healed the mother of thy wife, when she was tossing to and fro in feverish agony upon her burning couch? Who was it, Simon Peter, to whom thou thyself didst make that good confession—"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." He stands before thee now, thou faint-hearted disciple—Jesus of Nazareth, thy Teacher, thy Saviour, thy King. Oh, memory! surely thou art strangely darkened, when He who so long has been thy light and joy is thus forgotten! "Know not the man!" The infant, ere yet it

can lisp its mother's name, can tell the voice of her that gave it birth, and knows the features of her smiling face; but thou, forgetful apostate, knowest not, or wilt not know, the countenance of Him who hath given thee spiritual life, and has been approved to thy conscience, both by miracles and by the voice which came from "the excellent glory," as the Son of the Most High, "the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

Heaven forgive thee, Simon Peter; Heaven forgive *thee*, apostate Christian, for denying thy gracious Master, and for treading beneath thy feet the blood of the covenant of redemption! Surely, if there be any punishment hereafter—and who can doubt that there is?—it will fall with direful weight upon him who, having denied the Lord that bought him, has died without repentance, and gone down unshriven to the grave. Not for worlds would I take the place of the self-hardened apostate, who is hastening on, unpardoned, to the "lone land of dark despair." Oh, I would not, for the universe, be pursued, as he must be for all eternity, by the unrelenting furies of God's vengeance; and oh, I would not hear for the wealth of all lands and all seas, those fearful words which he must hear

forever rolling in his ears, and forever reverberating through the halls of the gloomy dungeon of eternal night—sounds trebly horrible, because once heard on earth, when uttered by himself—
“*I know not the man!*”

The fall of Peter took place amid other circumstances which in no small degree augmented its guilt. The damsel who first put the question to him seems to have had no evil design. She did not purpose to deliver him up, as his Master had been, to the Jewish sanhedrim. And yet the recreant disciple quailed like a very coward beneath the glance of her eye, and to her simple words of inquiry, whether he were not, like John, one of Jesus's disciples, he meanly, falsely answered, “I am not.” Ah, how much sin was couched under that short reply! how much ingratitude was there! how much food for future penitence, and long, long sorrow! Peter had fled in dismay, with the other disciples, from the fatal garden; and, with John, had followed his captive Master “afar off,” till He was brought to the house of the high-priest. Admitted by the female porter who guarded the little wicket which opened near the chief gate in the arched doorway of the mansion, Peter entered the court-

yard with a breast still fluttering with excitement; and when he heard the question of the maiden—put, no doubt, in the presence of the high-priest's servants, and of the attendant soldiery—his unexpectant heart started with apprehension and terror. He saw in thought the infuriate Malchus, whose ear his hasty sword had hewn away, and he feared to meet his angry foe. He felt that danger was nigh, and in his eager haste to ward off the threatened blow, his tongue rolled out a swelling falsehood, and he said, "I know not the man!" Consistency required that at every new interrogation he should return the same reply. And so he did—loading his soul with guilt, and pouring, at every fresh denial, another cup of burning gall into his throbbing bosom.

Thus is it ever with the untruthful man. The first falsehood is spoken in haste, without reflection. The second comes in to prop the uttered lie. The third follows; and thus it goes ever on, until the speaker is lost to shame; and, having his conscience seared, will wrap about him, in fancied security, the robes of hypocrisy and falsehood. Alas! he knows not in what a death-bringing garment he has clothed himself; and

little does he suspect that the cloak of untruthfulness which he draws so tightly round his person, will, like the fatal tunic stained with Nessus's blood, soon taint and fester his flesh, infusing its venom into every limb, and pouring down its deadly poison into the open blood-cells of his heart. The time *will* come—but it will come too late for his salvation—when he will feel but too keenly the empoisoned arrows rankling in his body; and when, like him who wore the robe of Nessus, he will die in agony unutterable; striving, but striving all in vain, to tear away the fatal garment that eats with remorseless bite into his quivering flesh, and shoots down into his soul a thousand winged pangs of woe.

“Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?” This was the question put to Peter by a kinsman of Malchus. It was a home-thrust to the terrified apostate; but, though every limb in his body was trembling with supernatural fear, he persisted stoutly in his first denial. Nay, he endeavored to support it by an oath, declaring, with an imprecation upon himself, “I know not the man.” He appealed solemnly to God as a witness that what he said was true—that he knew not the captive, Jesus of Nazareth. The crime

of Ananias and Sapphira was not as atrocious as this; and yet, when they spake their falsehood to the Holy Ghost, they fell in their death-agony to the ground. But Peter is not blasted, nor is his tongue miraculously withered at the root; although he seems most impiously to invite the vengeance of Almighty God. Perjured Peter, Jehovah pitied thee, and spared thee, though He might most justly have overthrown thee with His forked lightning, when thou didst so daringly invoke His vengeance, by saying, in substance, if not in words, "Great God, thou who hurlest the fiery thunder-bolts, lanch them this moment at my head, if I speak not the truth!"

It is a fearful thing to invoke the living God. He that does it should be certain that the occasion will fully justify the solemn invocation; and, above all, he should have full assurance that he calls on Jehovah to witness to the right and the true. And yet there have been men in every age, and there are men now, who will, like Peter, appeal to the Almighty in confirmation of a lie. They will do so, not only under the influence of uncontrollable terror, but deliberately, forewarned, and of set purpose and intention. I recollect but too well that, on a certain occasion, a person

with whom I was conversing, uttered what I had, as I thought—God grant that I was wrong—good reason to believe a falsehood. Perhaps I looked incredulous. The speaker thereupon repeated his assertion, and, raising his eyes to Heaven, as he did so, called God to witness that he spoke the truth. Oh, I could not describe to you the awful effect of those words upon my agitated soul. I was horrified: a cold shiver passed over my frame, and I felt the life-blood freezing round my heart. Throughout the whole day, that solemn asseveration rung in my ears; haunting me like a frightful specter from the regions of the lost. I could not rid myself of the impression, and I can not now, that Heaven was then called upon to bear witness to an untruth; and I wondered, and still wonder, that the Great God did not, at once and awfully, avenge the insult offered to His holy Majesty. But He did not; at least, not to human eye, but who can tell whether just then the recording angel did not blot out a name that, otherwise, might have been written in the book of eternal life?

If it be a fearful thing to invoke the Lord in confirmation of any assertion, however solemn, what shall we say of the practice—so common,

alas! among the people of our own loved city—of calling upon the God of Heaven on every petty and trifling occasion? The habit has become fearfully prevalent. Why, I know men of intelligence, of cultivation, of refined feelings and tastes—men whom, in many respects, I am compelled to admire—who interlard their whole conversation with oaths and appeals to the Deity; and thus cause nearly every sentence they utter to smell rank of corruption in the nostrils of every man who loves and serves his God. I can not but think “they know not what they do;” and I can not but say, as a minister of the Gospel of purity, that they who so thoughtlessly and so lavishly bandy about the name of the Great God, not only insult Him, and those who serve Him, but do dishonor to themselves as gentlemen and as members of cultivated and refined society. Nay, more. I feel bound to tell them, this morning—if there be any such present to-day, though I devoutly hope there are none—that they are running up a fearful debt in the great account-book of Heaven—a debt which, when they have not a penny left them from the wreck of their property, they will be condemned to pay to the uttermost farthing. It is true; for, if we

shall have to answer at the judgment, as we shall, for every idle word spoken in the flesh, surely "the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." Remember this, thou thoughtless swearer; and call no more so idly, so sinfully, upon thy God.

Besides being attested by an oath, Peter's denial had an additional circumstance of aggravation. He disowned his Master at a time when He needed, more than ever before, the sympathy and supporting presence of His disciples—especially of those who had known Him best and professed to love Him most. When his Teacher, whom he knew to be Divine, and on whose bosom he had, no doubt, often leaned his head, stood arraigned as a malefactor before the high-priest, Peter took not his place by the side of his captive friend; but slunk away at the first questioning, into the darkness of the fore-court, to hide his whitened face and conceal from every eye the signs of his unmanly trepidation. And when, after a time, he came forth from out the gloomy darkness, he crept back with silent footsteps to the "fire of coals," and there sat mute, while, a few paces distant, within hearing, and perhaps within sight, the unrighteous examina-

tion of his deserted Master was still in progress. Peter took not his station beside his Lord; to wipe the dew of agony from off His brow. He was not there, to interpose when the servant of the high-priest smote the fettered captive with the palm of his hand; and when the meek, forgiving Saviour said so calmly to His cowardly assailant, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but, if well, why smitest thou Me?" When the chosen friend of his heart most needed his sympathy, the trembling Peter was standing aloof; and when asked if he was not one of His disciples, was answering falsely, "I am not."

That the Apostle Peter should have fallen as he did, has seemed to many most strange, most wonderful. But it does not appear so very strange—nay, it will seem quite natural—when we remember that the sustaining hand of Providence had been withdrawn for a time; that this in which Peter denies his Master, was, as Luke says Jesus called it, "the hour of the power of darkness." As the patriarch Job had been, long ages before, so the followers of Jesus were now, handed over for a season to the control of Satan. It was a more than natural fear that seized upon the disciples of the Lord, when, at His arrest,

“they all,” in the very face of their recent promise, and of His solemn warning, “forsook Him, and fled.” It was a more than human temptation which overcame the self-confident Peter, when he was delivered to Satan, to be sifted as wheat. This, I doubt not, was “the hour of the power of darkness”—the heavy, misty hour which just precedes the dawn, when men, groping and stumbling along their gloomy road, look with most anxiety for the break of day.

Peter's fall, as I shall have occasion to show you more fully in another discourse, was needful to cure him of presumption; and it was needful as a warning example, for all time, to the Church of Christ. Reflecting on it, who can help exclaiming, “Oh, strength of man, what art thou but weakness! Human virtue, what thou but crime, when not upheld by God!”

Here is a specimen of human strength; self-confident Peter vanquished, when unshielded by the powers of Heaven, by the very first weapon hurled by Belial at his unprotected soul. If Peter fell, can we ward off the fatal dart? If Adam, and Noah, and Lot, and Moses, and John the Baptist, and Peter, and all the Lord's disciples, yielded to the temptation, and sinned, what

are we, that we should resist the arts and the wiles of the Deceiver? If the pillars of the Church have fallen, can we, its frail materials, stand? Oh, let us be warned, when we see that the most righteous, the most pious, have lapsed into transgression; and let us fear lest our feet may slip, and we fall to rise no more. If the bright suns of piety have suffered eclipses, what shall it not be with the smoking flax: "if the cedars of Lebanon have been almost rooted up, what shall it not be with the hyssop of the wall!" Fear not, your very weakness, if rightly felt, shall be your strength. Remember, each of you, the words of Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong." If tempted, look to God for aid. Be not self-confident, like Peter; but be humble. "*Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*"

TO

Mrs. Emily H. Ladd,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 27, 1855,

FOR WHOM THE SERVICES OF THE SANCTUARY WERE FRAUGHT
WITH BLESSINGS AS RICH AS COMFORTING, AND LED HER
WITH JOYFUL WILLINGNESS AND TRUSTING FAITH
TO THE FEET OF THE REDEEMER.

DISCOURSE IV.

APOSTASY FROM THE SAVIOUR.

APPEAL TO FALTERING AND BACKSLIDDEN CHRISTIANS.

“Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?”—JOHN, xviii. 26.

PETER—the impetuous, the ardent Peter—denied his Lord and Master. Three times within a single night, he declared, when accused of being Jesus’s disciple, “I know not the Man.” When asked if He were not one of our Lord’s followers, he thrice solemnly asseverated, “I am not.” He refused to acknowledge any connection with the captive that stood arraigned for his life before the bar of the Jewish high-priest. The Past, with its sweet intercourse, its joyous communings, its hallowed moments of heart-repose, were wholly banished from his memory by the fears and dangers of the Present. Terror had seized hold of the imagination of the trembling apostle;

and his knees quaked beneath him with mortal dread. Fear more than natural had banished the warning which he had received, and his boastful promise, entirely from his recollection; and even the sorrowful presence of his suffering Master was utterly forgotten. Peter saw nothing, thought of nothing, but that dire image of Death, which anxious apprehension had summoned up before his disordered vision. His soul quailed within him, when asked if he was not a disciple of the Nazarene; and his whitening lips faltered forth, with oaths and curses, the recreant answer, "I know not the man."

Is it possible for Jesus to forgive this cruel wrong? Will He not say within Himself, "Apostate, thou shalt die in thy sins; and when, after life's fitful fever, thou shalt knock at the gate of Paradise, and say, 'Lord, Lord, open unto me,' thou shalt hear Me declare to the angel that guards the portal, 'Turn him away—*I know not the man!*'" Oh, Peter, surely every mere mortal would say, "Thou hast sinned too deeply for forgiveness: there is no pardon for thee, whether in this life, or in that which is to come." But so did not—so thought not Jesus. He saw that "the hour of the power of darkness" had

overshadowed His once-faithful disciple, and, from the depths of His soul, He pitied his fall. He had withdrawn for a time the support of His sustaining arm, and had left the awe-struck apostle to struggle unaided, as best he might, with the powers of the kingdom of darkness. Peter, the self-confident, was conquered; and he would have remained Satan's captive forever had not Jesus, interposing to save him, snatched him in mercy from the grasp of the destroyer. His Master loved him still; and, so far from resenting his ungenerous denial, He only grieved over the human weakness which so soon had betrayed the ardent Peter, and the human blindness which so soon had led him into sin.

While the recreant apostle was still uttering the words of his third denial, invoking God to witness that he knew not the Nazarene prisoner, "immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew." Just at that moment, Jesus "turned and looked upon Peter." Oh, what a look was that! Grief unutterable, and love inexpressible, and infinite compassion, were all mingled in that eyegance from the suffering Son of God. Like the lightning's flash, it pierced through Peter's heart, and made its every pulse to throb again with

penitence and woe. Fear was banished : the flood-gates of sorrow were opened ; and, going forth into a place where no human eye could look upon his agony, Peter lifted up his voice, and wept aloud.

Never was sermon so eloquent as this speechless sermon from Jesus. He spoke not a word. He only turned round, with His meek, sad face, and cast one look from out those sorrowful eyes upon the faltering Peter. Immediately, all the ireful tumult of his soul was stilled ; and the waves of excitement and fear ceased to raise their angry crests upon his bosom's agitated sea. Reflection returned with quiet ; and with reflection, remorse. Oh, then he felt other billows rising within ; and the bitter waters of sorrow began to toss and roll with heaving current along the aching avenues of his heart.

The repentant Peter, feeling the rush of coming tears, went forth into the open street ; and there, amid the calm solitude of the early morn, he gave full vent to the emotions of his penitent and contrite soul. He called to mind the words of Jesus, warning him so solemnly that, before the day had dawned, he, the boastful, the over-confident, should deny his Master thrice ; “ and when

he thought thereon, he wept." Peter "wept bitterly;" he wept aloud: perhaps, he wept long. He remembered the prediction, 'so improbable, he once thought, of any fulfillment; but now, alas, too surely accomplished. He thought of Jesus's love; how He had instructed one so unworthy; how He had spoken, without reward, the words of eternal life; how He had revealed the truths which make wise unto salvation; how He had carefully watched over his spiritual safety, and had made him a guide and a leader in His newly-constituted Church; and how now, at last, having, by His heavenly teachings, incurred the hatred of the irreligious rulers of the nation, He was about, perhaps, to be offered up as a victim to their vengeance. When he thought of all this, and called to mind the look of mild reproof which Jesus had cast upon him at his third denial, bitter tears of heart-felt repentance burst forth from his weeping eyes, and fell in gushing torrents to the ground. The strong man was overcome. The courageous and the bold was distracted with grief, for the iron of guilt had entered his soul.

The gray light of that sad morning revealed a stalwart figure, kneeling in earnest prayer in a

retired corner, in one of the streets of Jerusalem. His face was covered with his robe, but its clustering folds could not conceal from the early passer-by that some deep sorrow was preying upon the manly frame which they enveloped. The trembling of the robe, and the stifled sob which, now and then, was heard within, betokened the presence of a suffering heart. But the violence of the grief was over; the storm of woe was now subsiding; for God had come with His "still small voice," and spoken peace to that troubled soul. Peter felt that he was forgiven; and he rose from that long, tearful prayer of contrition, a wiser, better man.

Peter never forgot the look which Jesus gave him—never, to his dying day. Nor did he forget the penitence which it wrought in his heart. He had received a lesson which cured him forever of his self-confidence and presumption. He never denied his Master again, but, remembering his weakness and his fall, he is more careful to make no rash and hasty promises. When Jesus met him, after His resurrection, at the Sea of Galilee, and inquired of him, as he pointed to the other disciples, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" Peter does not re-

ply, as, doubtless, he would have done at one period—"Yea, Lord, I do love Thee more than these;" but he answered, in meekness and humility, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." He remembered his former hasty assertion, and how it was scarcely made before it was falsified. His confidence in his own strength was gone; but yet he knew that, weak as he was, he loved his Saviour. Jesus saw that his heart was sincere, and again charged him with the oversight of His Church.* And right worthily did the restored and pardoned apostle perform the trust. He showed the sincerity of his penitence, not only by his tears, but by his deeds. Hear him, on the day of Pentecost, preaching Jesus and redemption so ardently that multitudes, being "pricked in their hearts," cry out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" See him testify to the resurrection, and proclaiming salvation through faith in his risen Lord, amid persecutions in Jerusalem, and, afterward, amid trials and dangers in the provinces of Asia the Less. Behold him proceeding, at length, to Rome; and hear him, when hanging there upon the cross, sobbing forth, in his last death-agony—when na-

* See Appendix, Note C.

ture, fainting, can no longer sustain her load of woe—"Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee."*

"Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" Peter had often been with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. It was a favorite resort of our Saviour, and thither He had frequently retired on leaving the stirring tumult of the city, to hold prayerful converse with God. It was here that He had just been arrested, a short time before Peter's denial; and here it was that, in His hour of need, all His disciples "forsook Him and fled." Peter had witnessed the terrible agony of his Master's soul, in immediate prospect of a cruel crucifixion; and he had heard the sad wail of grief bursting from His lips—"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." He had seen Him go alone twice into the thicker shades of the garden; and he had heard the sounds of agonizing prayer breaking on the calm stillness of the night. Though his eyes were heavy with sorrow, and he fell into sleep while Jesus was pouring out His soul in fervent supplication, he had yet heard, perhaps, amid his unquiet and broken slumber, those plaintive words of trustful self-abandon-

* See Appendix, Note D.

ment—"Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Jesus came back from the solitude in which He had wrestled with agony until great drops of bloody sweat had burst from every pore in His body, and found Peter, and James, and John, asleep. The weakness of the flesh could not bear them up through this hour of woe. Jesus roused the unfaithful watchmen from their untimely slumber, and said to them, in chiding kindness, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

Peter hears the rebuke, and he heard the warning. No doubt he mourned over his delinquency; and grieved that he had not been able to "watch one hour" with his suffering Lord. Perhaps he vowed he would never so offend again. But of what avail was his penitence, of what avail the hasty promise made in the secrecy of his bosom, when neither one nor both could fortify his heart in the moment of temptation and sudden fear? Surely it was a repentance which needed to be repented of; and it was a vow of faithfulness which needed to be vowed again. Surely there was a strange terror in those mock-

ing words, "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" when they could drive from Peter's mind all memory of incidents so recent, and so mournful withal, that the pen of recollection ought to have graven them in ineffaceable characters upon the tablet of his soul. Cruel is thy power, oh Temptation, and most ruthlessly is it exercised. Dark is the shadow of thy wings, brooding over the quailing spirit of feeble mortals; and deep and sullen is the flow of thy waves, sweeping on into the sea of oblivion man's vows, and promises, and hopes; and enwrapping forever in its black billows his most needed, most monitory, and most hallowed memories.

We that are Christians have often been seen in the garden with Jesus. We have been seen listening to the words of instruction which fall from the lips of His ministers; we have been seen putting Him on, when we first professed our faith, in the holy ordinance of baptism; we have been seen partaking with the saints on earth of the communion of His body and blood; and we have been seen kneeling before Him in prayer and supplication. All these places are garden-spots in which others have seen us with Jesus.

Here have we been conscious ourselves of being with Him ; sometimes in joy, sometimes in sorrow. But, oh, how often have the best of us gone forth, like Peter, from the garden, and practically forgotten that we ever had been there ; and there had spoken, face to face, in spirit with our Saviour and our God ! The first temptation had mastered us, and made us utter in practice, if not in words, a denial of our Lord and Redeemer. Sin had presented itself in an unusual, perhaps in an attractive, shape to our vision ; and our feet, unshod with the sandals of salvation, have not fled from the evil spirit ; but rather hastening to meet it, have been entangled in the meshes of the Tempter's net. So carried away have we been for a time, that we have, in the midst of unlawful pleasure, willfully forgotten the hallowed spot in which we have beheld and sympathized with our Saviour's sufferings ; and in which we have raised upward to Him the eye of trust and thankfulness, because He endured all His pains and woes for our redemption ; and so infatuated have we been, for the moment, with the delusive, cheating show of worldly joy, or worldly interest, that we have stifled the monitory whisperings of our guilt-stricken hearts ; and,

to the earnest expostulations of our quickened conscience, inquiring not in mockery, but in love and friendly warning, "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" we have each, blindly and wickedly, answered, "I know not the man."

Oh, there are times when I feel as though I could tear out this wicked heart of mine, and crush it to atoms beneath my heel. It is so deceptive, so desperately wicked. It is constantly betraying me—telling me that this is right, and this is just, and this is prudent, and this is wise; cheating me with world-wisdom, and world-prudence, and leading me to surrender, when I ought not, the citadel of my soul to the enemy. How perpetual the conflict which is going on within each of us between our human passions and our renewed will! Too often what we would, that we do not; but what we hate, that we do. Strange inconsistency! Yet even a Paul could testify that such was his experience; and could cry out, as my heart tells me I ought to cry this morning, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But, even in this hand to hand conflict with Apollyon, we may always, though sorely pressed,

come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that hath stripped us of the robes of sin, and clad us in the armor of salvation. Only let us stand firm, and resist the attack of Satan; and though the contest may be long and bloody, though we may be sorely wounded, we shall at last repulse the assailant; and, raising a shout of triumph over death and the grave, shall exclaim, in outbursts of joy, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" Yes, backsliding Christian, thou, too, hast been seen in the garden with Jesus. But thou art now denying by thy conduct that thou wert ever there; saying, as plainly as action can speak, to every one that asks thee the question, "Nay, I was never with Him in the garden. I have never been one of His disciples. I have not looked upon His countenance, revealed to my spiritual vision amid the full moonlight that shone on the dark grove of Gethsemane. I have not seen Him hang on the cross. I have not heard His cries of intensest woe. I have not fallen in faith and penitence at His holy feet, and said with believing Thomas, 'My Lord and my God.'"

Oh, my brother, my apostate brother, speak

not falsely to the Holy Ghost. Retrace the record of thy life. Let memory carry thee back to by-gone days, perhaps to the time of childhood; and look upon that well-known form, glowing with freshness and life, which bows before its God, and says, with loving spirit, "My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth." That image is thyself in other, younger, happier, days. Dost thou not remember now thine early communings with Jesus—outpourings of the soul uttered, perhaps, in childhood, by a mother's knee, or spoken forth in the stillness of that little room where thou wert wont to sleep away, so sweetly, the nights of hoping, joyous, gleeful, youth? Hast thou forgotten the time when thy Saviour first revealed Himself as precious to thy soul; when, overcome by the discovery that thy nature is corrupt, and subdued by the thought that Jesus came to cleanse it from defilement, thou didst give thyself to Him, in a tumult of penitence and gratitude, to serve Him in holiness and love all the days of thy life? Thou canst not have forgotten this. Memory is not so treacherous, I know.

Thou canst well recall the time when thou wert often in the garden with thy Redeemer; and

when thou wert not ashamed to be seen with Him in quiet meditation and prayer. But for long hast thou denied Him. *How long?* How many months, how many years, hast thou, ungenerous apostate, when others have inquired, and when thy conscience has asked, "Art thou not one of His disciples?" been replying, sometimes in words, and always in acts, "I am not." How long, oh, how long, merciful God, hast Thou not borne with this apostate from Thy Son, and kept back Thy vengeful arm from hurling him, as a wandering star, into "the blackness of darkness forever?"

Do not tell me thou hast attended the services of the sanctuary on Sunday; when thou knowest that thou hast done this for form's sake, or from habit, or because it is the custom of our people. Do not give in this plea to me—much less to God—when thou knowest that thy Bible is neglected, thy closet never visited for prayer, and thy whole life conformed to the maxims and pleasures of the world. Say not this, I pray thee, to excuse thy conduct; for it is only an aggravation of thy guilt. Every sermon preached to thee is another opportunity granted for repentance; and, if rejected, is another burden

hung about thy sinful soul. Thou mayest not feel the burden pressing so very heavily now, though, I doubt not thou dost often chafe and fume beneath it, and strive to tear away the galling chain of servitude from off thy neck; but, believe me, the time will come, when thou wilt stagger beneath its crushing weight more than the fabled Atlas staggers, who holds "the huge, round world" upon his bended back. The day of retribution will surely come; and then the burden of neglected opportunities, of time mispent, of gracious seasons unimproved, will hang like an incubus upon the soul of him who has turned from the blood of Christ, and sinned all his privileges away forever. And what a load will this be of superincumbent guilt! Not Pelion piled on Ossa can reach so high: not Etna, pressing with its whole mass, as the story runs, upon the giant Enceladus, can crush so heavily, and fasten so securely the lightning-blasted victim who struggles for freedom beneath its ponderous rocks, and pants, amid its volcanic fires, but pants in vain, to catch a breath of heavenly air.

Are there any here to-day who have once been in the garden with Jesus; but who are

found with Him no more? If there be, I would say to you, this is the time to repent, and to return "to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." Christ, the captive—He whom you have so shamelessly, so sinfully, denied—still loves you, His wandering, erring, children. See what a look of affection He casts upon you now from out those eyes that beam with mild reproof. Will you add to the afflictions of His bonds? The high-priest mocked Him, because he blindly thought Him a deceiver of the people, and a false Messiah. The Pharisees reviled Him, because they wanted no such man—a man not clothed with earthly power and majesty—to aspire to be the Ruler over Israel. The Roman soldiers insulted Him, because they wished to show how meanly they thought of His pretensions as a monarch and a king. But thou, oh ingrate, rejected Him, and trampled His authority under thy feet, when thou knowest in thy heart that this same Jesus, whom His countrymen wickedly crucified and slew, is "both Lord and Christ." Wilt thou make Him who loves thee to mourn again, as He mourned over Peter; and wilt thou, oh false-hearted, raise thine impious hand, not to wipe His tears away, but like the

servant of the high-priest, to smite Him in the face?

Jesus loves thee yet, apostate. The day of grace is not yet gone forever, if thou feelest thy heart melting to penitence beneath the loving eye-glance of the compassionate Son of God. It is strange that He should love thee still. But, He does; and loves thee well. And the Father loves thee, too. Come back, then, from thy long wanderings. Return unto thy Father's house; where thou shalt find bread enough, and to spare. Come, confessing thy guilt; and, while thou art yet coming, thy Father will run and meet thee; and, falling on thy neck, will imprint upon thy cheek the kiss of reconciliation, and clasp thee more fondly than ever to His paternal breast.

Prodigal, think on these things; and, as thou thinkest, weep. Weep, I tell thee; weep "bitterly," as did Peter—not tears of mere excited feeling, streaming from the tear-font, and poured never forth from the inmost chambers of the soul; not tears of despair, supposing thy time of repentance to be fled forever—for God still offers thee pardon, on the simple condition that thou return with penitent heart, and fresh vows of consecration, to Him whom thou hast so long,

and so ungratefully, denied; but tears of repentance, honest and unfeigned, flowing out from the freshly-opened fountain of love to Him who hath sprinkled with His own blood the mercy-seat of Heaven, and who has, therefore, become an all-prevailing Advocate and Intercessor—"Jesus Christ, the Righteous."

Do ye who believe hold fast to your profession. Be found often in the garden with Jesus; and let neither fear, nor love of worldly favor, tempt you ever to deny that you have seen, and communed with, and adored Him, there. Be ye "not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them who believe to the saving of the soul." Tempted as you may be, tried as you may be, "cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward." If sorely pressed by temptation, forget not that you have a compassionate and wise High-Priest in Heaven, "Jesus, the Son of God;" and cheer yourselves evermore with the thought, that he who rightly petitions the throne of the Mediator, will obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

TO

Miss Letitia Linton,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 25, 1855,

WHOSE RETIRING SPIRIT HAS ENJOYED SWEET COMFORT IN ITS
QUIET COMMUNINGS WITH JESUS.

DISCOURSE V.

SOUL-COMMUNINGS WITH JESUS.

APPEAL TO THE APOSTATE, THE SECRET CHRISTIAN, THE HALF-BELIEVER.

“Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?”—JOHN, xviii. 26.

No Christian can read the narrative of Peter's fall without fear and trembling. He can not help saying to himself, “If this favored Apostle denied His Master, and denied Him under circumstances of such aggravated guilt, how can *I* stand in the day of temptation?” It is well to feel so; for, though the spirit may be willing, the flesh is weak indeed. Yet we have no cause for despondency, we have no reason to fear, so long as we rely not on our own strength, but on the might of our God. The same Providence who hath suffered us to be led into temptation, will bear us safely through the fiery trial; and not so much as the seam of our garment shall be scorched. When the great Deceiver dashes upon

us unawares, and we feel the danger pressing hard, we have only to raise our eye to Heaven in prayer, and we shall receive divine assistance. Though hemmed in on every side, and beset with temptations from which it may seem impossible to flee; we need not despair; for He whose promise is sure and steadfast, will provide for the faithful soul a way of escape. He that trusteth in the Lord shall never fall. Peter fell because his faith was eclipsed by fear; because he no longer leaned upon the arm of God, but relied on the unaided strength, and unaided vigilance of his human heart. And so shall we fall, if we look not ever to Jesus, the Rock of our salvation, and say not ever within us, "Aid us, God of power, God of mercy, all our help must come from Thee!"

There are few, if any, in this assembly, who have not, at some time, felt the soul-moving power of the Gospel. I doubt if there is one reflecting person present who has not, once at least in his life, been seen in the garden with Jesus. Not one here this morning can deny, I think, that his thoughts have, at times, risen above the things which are visible, and busied themselves with the invisible and the eternal; that his conscience has

revealed to him a God; and that the Spirit of Jehovah has told him to seek the Lord, and to seek Him through Jesus of Nazareth, whom having quickened and placed upon a throne which is above all thrones, He hath constituted the King and the Judge of the world. Whoever has had such an experience, has been in the garden with Jesus; has had communings of some kind with his Saviour. He has seen Christ; and if, afterward, he has not been obedient to His Gospel, he is without excuse; for he has no cloak for his sin.

As I look around upon this congregation, I see some present who, I know, are not ashamed to confess that they have often been in the garden with Jesus; that it is still their chief delight to meet Him there; and, meekly sitting at His feet, to hear from Him the words of eternal life. Not one of them would shrink from the question, "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?" but would answer with joyful readiness—"Thou didst see me, and yet mayest often see me there; come thou, also, and learn with me lessons of heavenly wisdom." Sweet and holy have been your communings with the Redeemer, when, retiring from the busy world, you have gone up to

the temple to worship "the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," or have joined with the brethren in praise and prayer to the all-merciful God. Sweeter, perhaps, and holier still, have been the moments when, in the retirement of your closet, you have perused the precious promises of the Scriptures, till, moved to tears of joy, you have clasped the sacred volume in transport to your heart; or meditating on the Father's mercy, displayed so abundantly in the gift of His Son, you have fallen, in unconscious silence, on your knees, and given thanks to God, with streaming eyes, that one so unworthy should have Christ formed within him the hope of glory.

To the Christian, the whole earth is a garden of communion with his Saviour; and, wherever he may be, he is always with Jesus. As he threads the walks of busy life, and mingles with crowds of men who never think of God, he feels that Christ is ever at his side, to lead and guide him through the tortuous paths of his earthly pilgrimage; and, even when the din and tumult of the restless throng ring with deafening clamor in his ears, he can yet hear the whisperings of the internal Monitor—"Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

When, fleeing from the haunts of men, he seeks the retirement of the country, and lays his weary body in sweet repose on one of Nature's velvet couches, spread, as if for him, beneath some cooling shade; and when, reclining there, his ear drinks in the music of the vocal grove, while his uplifted eye wanders delighted over the blue vault of heaven, he feels that Jesus is with him there, pouring with kindly hand the balmy cordial into his cup of overflowing joy. Christ is with him every where, and always: upon the land, upon the sea; in the city, in the country; on the mountain-top, in the lowly vale; at home, abroad; in prosperity, in adversity; in joy, or in suffering; in sickness, or in health; in life, or in death.

This, my Christian brother, is a happy thought. Jesus, the Crucified, the Exalted, is with thee, every where and always, by His ever-present Spirit. Lay this sweet unction to thy soul when temptation presses hard upon thee; when trials come, and "storms of sorrow fall." Entwine the thought among the interlacing chords of thy heart, and let it always give thee comfort. If sickness attack, and lay thee on the couch of pain, remember, Christ, the soul's Physician, is

ever at thy side. His own hand will wipe the chilly drops from off thy brow, and thy head shall be pillowed on His sympathizing breast. Jesus ministers at the sick man's couch, when faith is active in his mind. The day of holy rest may come, and he may not be able to go up with God's people to worship in His sanctuary. But Christ will make his soul a sacred shrine for the conscious indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and when he hears the glad call of the Sabbath-bell, inviting all to worship, and the tread of those whose feet are turned toward the tabernacle of Jehovah, his lips will falter forth, in words of joyful gratitude :

"I may not tread
 With them those pathways, to the feverish bed
 Of sickness bound; yet, oh, my God, I bless
 Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath filled
 My chastened heart, and all its throbbings stilled
 To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness."

I cast another look around this assembly, and I see some here, perhaps, who once delighted to go with Jesus to the garden of meditation and prayer; but who have severed the chords which at one time bound them to their Saviour. They have met their Master often, and, it may be, for years have listened to His instructions, and

obeyed the voice of His commandments. But in some dark hour the arch fiend triumphed over their virtue, and wrapped them in the gloomy winding-sheet of death. Yielding to earth's temptations, they gave up their hope of Heaven, and madly flung their inheritance away. And for what? For a trinket; for a bauble; for an apple of Sodom, filled with ashes, and rotten at the core. Ah Vanity Fair, City of Delusion, how many a hopeful Christian has been lost in thee! Thy cares, oh World, thy honors, thy pleasures, have lured how many away from the path of life; and, cheating with deceptive show of happiness, have led them on, in blindness and in folly, along the road that leads to death eternal!

Apostate Christian, whither art thou hastening? Stay a moment, and look before thee. The road is broad, and very pleasant to the sight; but dost thou see its close? Look yonder at its outer verge, where earth and sky seem welded into one. See yonder moving figure drawing near its end. Gaze no longer around thee, but gaze ahead, and look at him. See him approaching unconsciously nearer and nearer to the edge of the precipice. Not a look does he cast before him; for his eye is full of the beauteous prospect

spread out on either side; and ever and anon he glances upward into the face of heaven, and laughs responsive to its smiles. He sees no danger; his heart is dancing in merriment within, while his feet are bearing him onward to certain destruction. And now the frightful gulf yawns beneath his planted footstep, and opens its greedy jaws upon its awe-struck victim. He sees, alas! too late, the dreadful precipice. Pale with terror, he starts back in hope to escape the fearful doom. Horror is painted in shades of deadly whiteness on every feature of his countenance; and a loud shriek of agony breaks upon the astounded air. For a second he stands tottering on the edge of the gulf, waving his arms aloft in the vain effort to regain his balance, while he feels the loosening earth crumbling, slowly crumbling away beneath his feet. An age of woe is crowded into that one brief moment. A surge, a wild toss of the arms, a piteous cry for mercy, and all is over.

This, apostate, is the end of that broad road which thou art traveling now. Its end is destruction. He whom thou sawest, was one who, like thee, had once loved, but then denied, his Lord. Jesus never cast a look on him that would lead him

to repentance, but left him to blindness and to death. May He never leave thee, my friend, my brother. Resist not the Spirit striving with thee now; but be guided by Him, yield thee to His influence, and reseek the path of wisdom and of virtue. Turn thee; why wilt thou die? A few steps more, and it will be too late to recede: thou wilt topple over the precipice, and be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. Be not another victim of the Tempter. Lay not, I entreat thee, oh lay not thy shattered bones in the dark and stony valley that lies on the outskirts of Vanity Fair.

“Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?” Yes, backsliding Christian, you once delighted to be found with Christ: you were not ashamed to own your Lord, or to defend His cause. But coldness has crept over you; and you no longer enjoy seasons of refreshing converse with your Saviour. This coldness, I say, has *crept* over you; it came by degrees; it did not seize upon you in a moment, and hurry you away with hasty footsteps from the presence of your Redeemer and your God. You began by neglecting one religious duty, and then another, until at last, you left off the performance of all. First, per-

haps, you forgot to seek your closet in secret prayer: then you began to omit family devotions: next you grew lax in attendance on the weekly prayer-meeting: then you became irregular in going to the public worship of God's temples: you lost your love for the communion with Christ, and with His saints on earth; you began to care little for preaching, and less for religious instruction. At last the church was forsaken, prayer wholly restrained, the Bible closed; and like the sow that was washed, you returned to your wallowing in the mire. Often, since then, have you denied in your life, perhaps often in word, that you have ever been in the garden with Jesus; saying, untruthfully, "I know not the man." Coldness came over you by degrees: the further you removed yourself from Jesus, the colder you became, just as the earth grows chillier the more it recedes from the sun.*

And where art thou now, apostate? Frozen is thy heart: thy tongue is stiff and numb: thine

* As to the fact, the earth is much nearer the sun in winter than it is in summer, there being 3,000,000 miles difference between its distance on the 1st of July and on the 1st of December. The earth *would* grow colder as it recedes from the sun, were it not that the increased verticalness of the sun's rays counteracts the natural tendency, and more than overcomes it. The reader will understand why I retain the figure.

ear is chilled to all sense of feeling; and thine eye is glazed with icy coldness. What can bring thee back to life? If any thing *can* melt thee, and wake again the wonted pulsations in thy congealing bosom, it is the fond, the loving look of Christ, piercing through the frosty steel that locks thy breast, and warming back to life and motion the frozen current in thy veins. I beseech thee, as thou wouldst be saved, turn not away from the glance of His compassionate eye. Look thy Saviour—thy abused, thy rejected, thy insulted Saviour—in the face; and let the affection that lights His eye kindle afresh the fire of love upon the altar of thy soul. Think of His mercy toward thee—mercy undeserved—that thou shouldst be alive to-day. Think thereon; and, as thou thinkest, weep bitter tears of penitence. Oh, it is time for thee to think; it is time for thee to weep; it is time for thee to fall, bathed in tears, at Jesus's feet, and ask for pardon there. Come, then, and seek forgiveness. Come with this prayer: “Lord, I have wandered; but I return repentant. Receive me back again; and ever guard me, and keep my feet from falling:

“ ‘ If near the pit I rashly stray,
 Before I wholly fall away,

The keen conviction dart :
 Recall me by that pitying look,
 That kind, upbraiding glance, that broke
 Unfaithful Peter's heart.' "

There are some here to-day, it may be, who, like Peter, are attempting to follow Christ "afar off;" who *do* seek communion with Jesus, but who, if asked, would deny that they have ever been with Him in the garden. They lack the moral courage to own their Lord. They hope, perhaps, that they are religious: they think they love their Saviour: they certainly admire His character, and feel it their duty to obey His precepts. But, notwithstanding all this, they have not confessed Him before men, and are not willing to confess Him in the presence of all Israel, and before the sun. They resort, now and then, to the garden which is frequented by Jesus: they kneel with Him in prayer; they receive with apparent gladness the holy words of instruction which fall, like drops of liquid honey, from His lips; they are even affected to tears at the recital which He gives of His undeserved and cruel sufferings; and they can not hear, without pangs of self-reproach, that He endured all this for them, and gave Himself to death, that they might live. They believe that Jesus is the Son

of God; that He is the Saviour, and the only Saviour of sinners; and they hope that they, through Him, shall attain to everlasting life. But, in the face of all this, ask one of these secret disciples of Christ—one of these who are trying to follow Him “afar off,” “Art not thou one of this man’s disciples?” and he will answer you, “I am not.”

I am filled with anxiety concerning thee, my friend—thou who art trying to serve Jesus in secret, while publicly thou art one of the adherents of Satan. Thou art standing on very perilous ground. Beware lest it open, and engulf thee forever. Hear the words of Christ Himself, and lay them to heart: “Whosoever shall deny Me before men”—and remember, denial in practice is just as sinful as denial in word—“him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven.”

Wherefore is it that, believing in Jesus, and professing in thy heart to love Him, thou refusest to acknowledge His authority before men; to renounce publicly all allegiance to the world, to the flesh, and to Belial; and to join thyself openly with those who, having been baptized with Christ in the likeness of His death, have

risen from the liquid grave, to walk with Him, and with one another, in newness of life? Dost thou still hanker after the riches or honors of the world? Then thou dost not truly love Christ. He is not, to thee, "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." No man can be obedient unto two masters: thou canst not serve God and Mammon. Dost thou wish to retain thy grasp on the pleasures of earth; to quaff at one time from the cup of worldly joy, and, at another, from the goblet of eternal life? Believe me, one drop of the poisoned liquors of earthly pleasure will taint and neutralize all the life-giving properties of the waters of salvation. Thou canst not hold earth in one hand, and heaven in the other. Christ has no concord—no agreement whatever—with Belial. Art thou ashamed to confess thy Master publicly, and to acknowledge that all thy hope of salvation is in Christ Jesus? He whom thou lovest, and professest to honor, the Lord of Life, speaks thus to thee, thou shrinking soul: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels'." Ponder well this saying: think on it, until, casting all

fear behind thee, thou canst break forth in the words of the poet :

“Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may
 When I 've no guilt to wash away,
 No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
 No fears to quell, no soul to save.
 Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
 Till then, I boast a Saviour slain ;
 And, oh, may this my glory be—
 That Christ is not ashamed of me.”

Perhaps worldly ties bind thee to earth? Break them, if need be; for he that loveth father, or mother—or son, or daughter—or husband, or wife—or brother, or sister—more than Christ, shall never inherit His kingdom. Perhaps, thou fearest the duties, and responsibilities, and trials, of the Christian profession. Let not these deter thee, else thou art lost forever. Jesus Himself speaks to thee a solemn admonition : “ He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me ; he that findeth his life, shall lose it ; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall find it.”

“ Did not I see thee in the garden with Him ?” “ Yes, you did,” I hear a voice reply ; “ but I would not have all men know that I have loved and learned of Christ. Not that I am ashamed :

oh, no! I would not blush to own my Lord. But, I fear that, were I known as a Christian, and were I to take the vows of obedience on me publicly, I might, by acting unworthily, bring reproach upon the Church of Christ." Perhaps you might; but never so long as you walk humbly before God, and meekly follow the leading of His Spirit. But, how unworthy, how improper, an objection is this which you urge? Does not your present conduct bring reproach upon the Church of God? Are you not, every day, practically denying your Saviour? Jesus Himself says: "He that is not with Me, is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad." Art thou with thy Saviour, or against Him? Art thou gathering with Him, or art thou scattering abroad? Does thy example bring men to repentance, or does it lead those that see thee, and hear thee, away from Christ? No man liveth to himself. If thou wilfully standest aloof from the Church—the flock of Christ—and wilt not aid in bringing others into the fold, thou wilt turn no sinners to righteousness; and, I much fear me, thou wilt not, with all thy imagined love for Jesus, and all thy zeal in His cause, even so much as save

thine own soul. May God teach thee, and give thee the will to perform thy whole duty to thy Saviour and to the world.

There are some here to-day, I doubt not, who are not even attempting to follow Christ "afar off;" but who, nevertheless, have been "in the garden with Him" one time, at least, in their lives. They have looked upon His agony: they have seen His suffering countenance: they have beheld His writhing limbs: they have gazed upon His wounded side, and seen the life-blood gushing from His heart. They have been touched by the sight; but have not been moved to heartfelt penitence. They have admired; they have worshiped; but they have not loved. These, too, have virtually denied the Lord that bought them; saying, each, in all the conduct of his life, and sometimes saying with his tongue, "I know not the man."

Too true is it; thou dost not know the Man. Couldst thou know Him, couldst thou see Him in His true character—couldst thou be made to feel how much is comprehended in that soul-stirring expression, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world"—thou wouldst never dare, never wish, to deny Him more; but

falling before Him, in trembling adoration, thou wouldst exclaim, with Thomas—no longer “faithless, but believing”—“My Lord, and my God!”

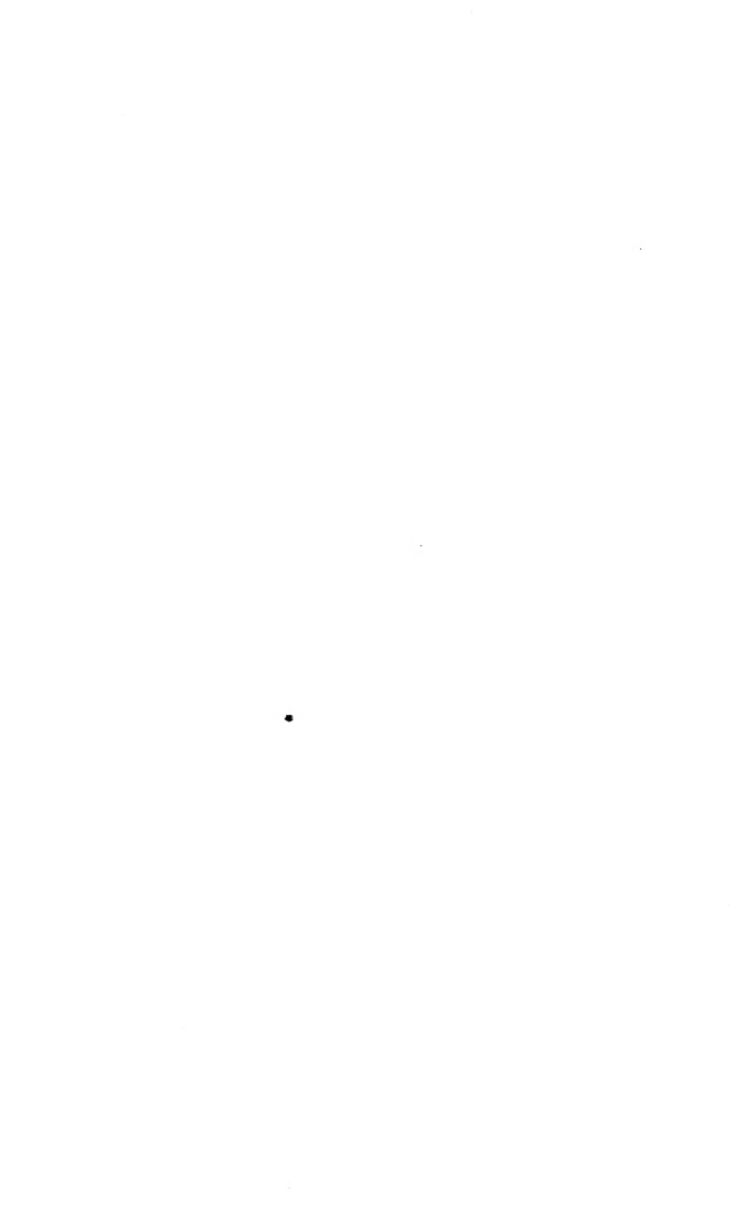
Thou *hast been* in the garden with Jesus; and yet, by thy life and thy words, thou hast ever said, “I have not.” He whom thou hast denied has often cast upon thee a reproachful glance. Tell me truly: is it not so? Hast thou not seen Him weep at thy folly; and hast not thine eye quailed, and thy heart beat faster, beneath His looks of mournful pity? Do not deny it: it is true. And yet, thou hast not relented; thou hast not, like Peter, shed tears of penitence and woe.

There is a time coming when the eye of Jesus, no longer beaming with rays of Heavenly love, will flash with flames of fire; when out of His mouth shall go forth a two-edged, devouring, sword; and His voice shall be as the sound of many waters. Then shall His feet glow as burnished brass: “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” shall be written on His blood-dyed vesture, and on His glittering thigh: and He shall march forth, attended by the armies of Heaven, to tread “the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” Wilt thou be able to look upon Him then; or wilt thou wail because of His presence?

But that time is not yet. The look of Jesus is still compassionate and tender. The same eye that wept over Jerusalem; the same eye that looked so kindly upon Peter, is fixed upon thee. The voice of Him that prayed for pardon for those who nailed Him to the cross, offers thee now forgiveness and salvation. That eye is filled with tears; that voice is trembling with love unutterable. Jesus speaks to thee from Heaven: "Repent, and I will not blot thy name from out of the book of life, but I will confess thee before My Father, and before His angels." Canst thou, oh, canst thou, hear this invitation all unmoved? Fall in adoring wonder at His feet: "Weep, believe, and sin no more." Call upon thy soul, and all that is within thee:

"Heart of stone, relent, relent;
 Break, by Jesus's cross subdued;
 See His body mangled, rent,
 Covered with a gore of blood:
 Sinful soul, what hast thou done?
 Crucified th' Eternal Son.

"Wilt thou let Him bleed in vain?
 Still to death thy Lord pursue?
 Open all his wounds again?
 And the shameful cross renew?
 No: with all my sins I 'll part:—
 Break, oh, break, my bleeding heart."



TO

Miss Adelaide Battaille,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 25, 1855,

TO WHOM THE GOSPEL CAME WITH UNEXPECTED POWER IN GOD'S
TEMPLE; AND WHO NOW, STRIVING "TO FULFILL ALL
RIGHTEOUSNESS," THANKS THE LORD WITH LIPS
AND HEART OF GRATITUDE FOR HIS IN-
FINITE COMPASSION AND LOVE.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE PROPRIETY AND BEAUTY OF BAPTISM.

“Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.”—MATT., iii. 15.

It was the close of the vintage-season of the year. The leaves had now begun to fall, and the grass was fast fading and withering away. 'T was early in the autumn, that joyous season when Nature yields her last and choicest fruits, and the air blows cool and balmy on the heated cheek. The sun had just sunk to his evening rest, and his last beams were playing, with lingering fondness upon the summits of the cloud-capped mountains of Moab, and were lighting up the western sky with many a rich but fading tint of crimson beauty. The river Jordan lay sleeping in the mellow rays of the departing sun, moving on with gentle flow within its verdure-covered banks. The broad and fertile valley through which its rippling waters coursed their

way, presented a rare and lovely spectacle to the eye that looked upon its wide expanse. The whole plain in the neighborhood of Jericho, on either bank of the river, though scorched by the heat of the departed summer, still bloomed with beautiful vegetation. The olive-tree, and the fig, the almond, the spreading palm, and the lofty poplar, shot up in gracefulness toward the sky, and waved their branches in the evening breeze. The stately sycamore, the acacia, the bending willow, hung in witching pensiveness above the waters of the Jordan, and cast their shadows on its sleepy waves. The sides of the river were yet adorned with flowers of various kinds, some quite faded, but some still pouring their perfume on the ambient air—the hyacinth, the lily, the rose, the tulip, the narcissus, and many other plants of rarest hue and fragrance. The river seemed enrobed in evergreens—“trees fringed with mosses, or festooned with climbing plants”—some clad with intertwining vines of grape, and heavy-laden with the purple clusters—“overhung the banks, and waved their dark and luxuriant foliage above the stream.”*

On the eastern side of the river, not far from

* See Appendix, Note E.

where the road that leads to Jericho crosses the waters, near the place where the Israelites passed over when going into Canaan, and where the fugitive David crossed when fleeing from Absalom, his son, there stood a man of strange but most imposing aspect. He was young—scarce over thirty; but thought had carved the lines of ripened manhood upon his noble brow. There was an air of holiness about him, as he stood so silent by the gently-murmuring stream. His head was bared, and the dark locks fell in thick clusters upon his swarthy neck. His feet were shod with sandals, and round his manly form there hung a loosely-fitting garment, woven of camel's hair, and fastened about his waist with a girdle of leather. His eye gazed musingly on the waters, and he held converse, in his retirement, with thoughts that were busy in his heart. "Where," mused the Harbinger—for it was John the Baptist who was meditating, in silence and alone, upon the Jordan's eastern bank—"Where is He that is to come—the Messiah, the promised Prince, the Redeemer of Israel? 'Tis time that He had made His appearance; for six months already have I announced His advent; but He comes not yet. Where is He now? Where is

He of whom I must bear witness that He is the Messiah, the anointed Son of God?"

Footsteps were heard approaching. The Harbinger looked up at the sound. He beheld the figure of one he knew; whom he had seen and conversed with when a youth—a relative of his, with whose purity and holiness he was well acquainted. Jesus of Nazareth stood before him, calm, dignified and majestic, bearing Himself as Heaven's anointed King. John had not yet recognized Him as the Messiah, though the presentiment might, at times, have shot, like a flash electric, through his mind, that his holy cousin was none other than Jehovah's chosen King over Zion. The Messiah was, he knew, to be revealed to him by a sign from Heaven—the descent of the Spirit upon Him at the time of His baptism. That sign had not yet been received, and John was still awaiting its appearance.

Though the Baptist knew not Jesus as the expected Christ, he knew Him as a man eminent for piety and virtue. When, therefore, Jesus offered Himself, as He did now, a candidate for baptism, the Forerunner hesitated, and feared to perform the rite upon one so much holier and purer than he who administered the ordinance.

“John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?” What humility was here; what a nice sense of propriety; for the Harbinger felt that a baptism which was based on repentance of sin on the part of him who received it, and bound each candidate to bring forth the fruits that were meet for repentance, could not be performed with fitness upon one whose character was unsullied by a stain, and whose whole life had been a life of sinlessness and purity immaculate. But there were other reasons which made it proper and becoming that Jesus should receive the rite of baptism at his hands. These John saw not yet, nor did he see them till, after performing the ordinance, he beheld the Spirit of God descending and lighting upon the new-baptized.

Jesus met and answered the Forerunner's objection, saying, “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” The Baptist's hesitation vanished; and he forthwith proceeded to administer the sacred ordinance.

With stately step and slow John moves toward the Jordan, and advances with modest bearing into the midst of the stream. There he stops,

and waits the coming of the holy candidate. Casting aside His upper robe, and putting off His way-worn sandals, Jesus steps with graceful movement into the calm, unruffled waves; and takes His place beside the Baptist.

It is a lovely scene—scene worthy of the poet's pen, or painter's pencil. The two stand still a moment, with steadfast eye upraised, in rapt communion with their God. The one has wonder pictured on his swarthy face: the other has hope, and peace and quiet trustfulness beaming from every feature of His lovely countenance. The shadows of evening are gathering thick and fast; and tall, broad forms of foliage-covered trees are mirrored in the limpid waters which flow, in silent eddies round the limbs of John and Jesus. Now and then, a solitary sunbeam, piercing through the overhanging branches, casts a tinge of reddening light upon the surface of the waves, and quivers with mellow softness around those silent, prayerful men. All nature is strangely quiet; for Nature's God is here. The songsters of the grove pour forth no more their liquid notes of melody; the evening breeze rustles no longer amid the whispering foliage; and the waves of the Jordan have ceased their flow.

Hushed is every note and every whisper; and a silence deeper than the silence of midnight reigns around.

The Baptist places his trembling hand upon the submissive candidate, and buries Him, with an easy, graceful motion, beneath the Jordan's yielding waves. The waters meet above the head of Jesus, and form a liquid grave. Then, uplifting, John leads the New-Baptized toward the river-bank. As the two move onward, arm in arm, the heavens are suddenly opened; and the Spirit of God, descending like a dove, alights and abides upon Jesus. Then the Harbinger knows that this is the promised Messiah; that this is He who shall baptize "in the Holy Ghost, and in fire." Joy unutterable springs up within his soul; and shows itself in wondering radiance upon his face. Jesus of Nazareth, then, is the Anointed of Jehovah; He is "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." John's doubts, his fears, are all removed, when he sees the Spirit descending upon the New-Baptized, and hears "a voice from Heaven," bursting upon the universal stillness, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

"Thus it becometh *us* to fulfill all righteous-

ness." So spake Jesus to the Harbinger. It was proper that John should baptize Jesus; for it was part of the counsel of God. John was sent "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." This he did by preaching repentance, and baptizing those who professed it. He was sent also to bear witness of the Messiah; and to give his testimony to Jesus as the Saviour of the world. He was to discover the person of the Anointed by a sign that should accompany His baptism; and having received this, he was to testify that He who had been thus revealed, was the expected Christ. This was the signification, for John, of the rite which he performed upon Jesus; for it was by His baptism that the Messiah was to be made manifest to Israel. On this account it was that it was becoming and proper for the Baptist to perform the rite which he practiced, upon the person of the Saviour.

As it became John to administer, so it became Jesus to receive, the ordinance of baptism. There is a fitness, and there is a propriety, in all the acts of the Redeemer, such as mark the doings of no other man of ancient or of modern times. All that He did, and all that He said, was perfectly adapted to His situation, and the object

of His mission to humanity. Every act which He performed had a peculiar fitness; every expression which He uttered, had a peculiar propriety—His deeds and His words being, in every case, just those which the circumstances demanded. Read the record of His life as given by the four Evangelists, oh thou that canst not see the loveliness of Jesus's character, and note how simple, chaste, dignified and appropriate is the language of Christ—how fitting the occasion, whether it required few words or many—how calm and impressive, how manly, how god-like, His whole conduct, in every act of his public ministry, from His baptism in the Jordan to His ascension from the Mount of Olives. Point, if thou canst, to any character in history so completely perfect. Neither Socrates nor Plato, neither Cato nor Seneca, can compare to Jesus. None can equal Him; for He in all He did, and all He said, showed forth the incarnate God.

It well became Jesus to be baptized by John. True, the Saviour needed not to exercise repentance; for He was spotless, pure, and perfect, But it was becoming and proper in Him, though He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," to conform, as man's representative,

to every divine institution ; setting His followers an example of righteousness for all coming time. He had taken upon Himself the nature of sinful flesh ; and it was therefore fitting that He should perform in His own person all that was incumbent on and necessary for sinful man to perform. He took upon Himself the whole yoke of the law ; and He fulfilled it to the last requirement. For this reason was He circumcised ; for this reason did He attend the Jewish festivals, and conform to the worship of the Temple. John's baptism was ordained of God ; therefore Jesus meekly and reverently received the ordinance. It became Him—God as He was, perfect and pure as He was—having, of His infinite love, assumed, for our sake, the likeness of sinful flesh, to go through all the appointed rites and purifications which pertained to fallen humanity.

Jesus submitted, therefore, to the baptism administered by the Forerunner ; and, in this way, set you and me an example, my friends, commanding us, and all that love Him, to observe every institution of Divine authority. Have we each done so ? Have we each followed our Lord in *all* His appointed ways ? Are there not some here to-day who have sincerely repented of their

sins, who have been led to believe in Jesus as the Saviour; but who have not yet descended with Him into the waters of baptism, have not been buried with Him in the likeness of His death, have not risen with Him in the likeness of His resurrection?

Why dost thou hesitate to render obedience to the plain, positive, and unequivocal requirement of the Redeemer? What hindereth thee from being baptized? Thou dost profess to believe in Christ, to rely on His merits for pardon, to expect from Him the gift of eternal life; and yet, with all thy supposed faith, thou hast not, up to this time, given thyself away to the Saviour in the solemn rite of His appointment, to walk with Him before the world in righteousness forever. Is not thy faith defective? Search thy heart, and find what cause it is that keeps thee back. Can it be *fear*? He that loves his Saviour from the soul, will follow whithersoever He may lead. Can it be *pride*? He whose heart has been touched by the finger of love divine, will cast aside every thought of self, and think only of Jesus and His sin-atonement cross: he will joy at the thought of following in the footsteps of his Heavenly Master, and, as he prepares to descend

into the baptismal font, he will say in his heart,
 “Blest Saviour, I hear Thee, and obey :

“ ‘Did Thou the great example lead,
 In Jordan’s swelling flood ?
 And shall my pride disdain the deed
 That ’s worthy of my God ? ’ ”

Jesus appeals to thee to-day, oh thou that knowest thy duty, but hast performed it not. Listen to Him, speaking now the kindly words of invitation : “Come, take up thy cross, and follow Me.” Hear His voice : thou canst not otherwise become His disciple. Only to those who obey Him has He promised eternal life. Come, look upon this liquid tomb, emblem of thy Saviour’s grave. Look until thy whole soul is filled with love, and thy heart is fired with the spirit of obedience : look until thou canst say in trembling accents of gratitude—

“Blest the sign which thus reminds me,
 Saviour, of Thy love for me :
 But, more blest the love that binds me,
 In its deathless bonds, to Thee.
 Oh, what pleasure,
 Buried with my Lord to be !

“Should it rend some fond connection,
 Should I suffer shame or loss,
 Yet the fragrant, blest reflection—
 I have been where Jesus was—
 Will revive me,
 When I faint beneath the cross.

“Fellowship with Him possessing,
Let me die to earth and sin ;
Let me rise to enjoy the blessing
Which the faithful soul shall win :
May I ever
Follow where my Lord has been.”

The baptism of Jesus had, also, an important personal signification. It was to Him—as it was to every one that knew Him—a sign of His outward purification, of His separation from all common and secular employments, and of His consecration to His spiritual calling under God. Hitherto, from His youth up to His thirtieth year, He had passed His life amid secular engagements ; laboring, selling, buying, and taking part in all the offices and duties of society. He needed, therefore, at His entrance upon His Messianic vocation, to show, by the symbolical rite of baptism, that He now rid Himself forever of all worldly associations, and came forth from the cleansing waters “ pure and entire, as the Christ of God.” Henceforth, he was to be wholly occupied with his appropriate calling—bringing to all mankind freedom, and pardon, and salvation.

“Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.” Heaven is opened upon Him—a sign, most significant and beautiful,

that communication is now and forever established between man and God. The Spirit comes down from the upper sky—a symbol of the divine existence now revealed in Christ. The Spirit descends in the form of a dove—a representation of the soft and mild manner in which it is to operate in the Redeemer. The Spirit abides upon Him—a symbol of the constant and equal operation of the Spirit of God in Christ; not fitful and interrupted, as in the case of the prophets, but thoroughly penetrating His soul, and exhibiting itself in all His conduct.

In the midst of this strange sight—when Jesus is looking downward with beaming eye upon the parting waters, eddying round His feet, and while John is gazing upward, astonished and amazed, into the opening sky, whence streams a rosy light of mellow splendor—there comes a voice from heaven, rolling in deep-toned accents along the valley of the Jordan, and, striking with reverberating echo upon the glittering rocks and woody promontory towering up on either side of the fertile vale—“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.” It was as though “All the fountains of the Holy Spirit, descending, had rested upon Jesus, and said,” as the so-

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called "Gospel of the Hebrews" represents the strange occurrence, "My Son, I awaited Thee in all the prophets, that Thou mightest come, and that I might rest in Thee: for Thou art my abiding place; Thou art my first-born Son, that reignest forever."

That was a holy sight. Jesus, my Redeemer, shone resplendent then, in all His native loveliness and glory. Image of heavenly beauty, be Thou printed on the tablet of my heart. Memory, keep thou my Saviour ever thus before me; pure and spotless as when He rose from that translucent tide, and radiant glories kindled round His head. Son of God, make Thou this sacred recollection hallowed:

"Oh, let Thine image, as e'en then it rose,
 Live in my soul forever calm and clear,
 Making itself a temple of repose
 Beyond the breath of human hope or fear—
 A holy place, where, through all storms, may lie
 One living beam of day-spring from on high." *

"Thus it *becometh* us to fulfill all righteousness." Baptism is a *becoming* ordinance. Jesus Himself received it, and sanctified it; and He bids each of us who believe in Him, and trust in Him for salvation, to imitate His example. We are to

* See Appendix, Note F.

follow in His footsteps; to go down with Him into the baptismal waters, and there to bury, in a symbolic tomb, the affections and the lusts of the natural, unrenewed, man. Baptism is the badge of Christian discipleship; of being grafted into the Church, the body of Christ. He that receives it, solemnly renounces before his fellow-believers, and before all men, the world, the flesh, and him who rules the kingdom of darkness. He separates himself wholly from the world, and gives himself, without reservation, to the Saviour. Baptized unto Christ Jesus, he is "baptized unto His death, . . . that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so "he should walk in newness of life." Buried with his Redeemer in baptism—the water closing round him, and covering him, as in a liquid grave—he rises with Him—emerging from the crystal flood—unto another existence of holiness, and virtue, and truth.

Baptism, then, symbolizes the moral renovation of him that receives it; the believer being immersed in water—the element of purification—thereby, typically depositing the old man, with all its sins, in the lustral font, and rising from out the wave a new man, so to speak, created after

God "in righteousness and true holiness." While the ordinance symbolizes all this, it shows forth also, in a striking manner, the belief and the hope of the candidate in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Redeemer; and becomes thus, in many ways, to every sincere recipient, "the answer of a good conscience toward God."

Baptism is a becoming ordinance, then, as being a beautifully significant type of prominent facts in the Christian life and profession. Who can look upon the administration of the rite, and not feel its appropriateness? Not a heart that is ever subdued by the solemn, but throbs with a strange sensation of awe-profound, when the eddying waters close over the candidate, and his form is buried far from sight. A baptism is a scene of deep solemnity; and cold must be that soul that can gaze upon it all unmoved.

The rite is most impressive to those upon whom it is performed; to the members of the Church who stand around; and to the spectators who look upon the ordinance.

It is a solemn moment to the candidate, when he descends into the font of baptism. The step which he is taking is the most important of his life. Believing in Jesus, and trusting in Him

alone for salvation, he is about to dedicate himself publicly to the service of his Saviour; to renounce the world, and to live henceforth to God. Thought is busy within his heart, as he stands for a moment, engaged in silent prayer, in the midst of the encircling waves. The words of consecration are pronounced above him—"I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—and he feels the placid waters streaming in upon his buried body, rolling above him with gentle flow, and filling his ear and soul with sounds of melody. Then is he Christ's indeed; dead to sin, but alive to holiness; consecrated forever, by his own solemn vow, and by the sacred ordinance just received, "to the ennobling and joyful service of the Triune God." He rises from the watery grave, as it were, another man. Faith, hope, and love, are each confirmed within his soul. The Church is his; and now a thousand guards from sin are thrown around him by the ready hands of Christian brethren; and Jesus, the head of the Church, enfolds him in His loving arms. He leaves the font with holy joy playing round his heart, and beaming sweetly from his countenance. The world now knows him as a

Christian; and he lives among men as a willing follower of Jesus. Ever afterward he looks back with increasing interest to his baptismal dedication; and remembers, with quiet satisfaction, the time when he heard the sacred waters murmuring above his head, and felt the answering springs of gladness burst forth within his soul.

The members of the church stand by and gaze with holy emotions upon the ordinance. They see another soldier enlisting in the army of Christ, and their hearts are filled with gratitude. They remember the time when they, too, found "the place where Jesus lay," and when they, too, gave themselves to God. The ready tear starts forth unbidden from the font of joy; and a prayer of thanksgiving and praise rises upward and floats to Heaven, in curling clouds of grateful incense, to Him who sits upon the throne, and to his ever-blessed Son.

They who have no personal interest in the blood of Christ can not but feel impressed with reverence and awe when they look upon the rite of baptism. Those who were formerly their companions—who, like them, had once no love for Jesus, and lived the life of worldlings—they now see changed in mind and purpose; see them

gladly resigning the world and all its pomp and vanity, and freely giving themselves away to Christ. They see the old, the middle-aged, the young, following the example of their Lord—buried with Him to sin, and rising with Him to life. As the waters close over the body of the candidate, and he comes forth again, dripping with Heavenly dew, with face all lighted with the smile of joy and peace, they can not but say within themselves, “How beautiful, how solemn, how becoming!” And they can not but feel that they who follow Jesus in the way of His appointing, are happy—happy in life, and, if faithful to their baptismal vow of consecration, happy in eternity; that they

“Who love Christ's mystic grave,
Shall brighter deeps explore—
Embosomed in the radiant wave
That rolls on Glory's shore.”

Hast thou ever seen a baptism? Was it not a deeply solemn sight? That aged man, how serenely calm he looked as he rose from out the crystal tide. That “lordly form” that moved “in manhood's towering pride,” how meekly it sunk beneath the wave, and how joyously it left the font to walk hereafter in newness of life.

That fair and fragile woman, how cheerfully,
with what sweet faith, she gave herself to Christ ;

“ How with a firm, unshrinking step,
The watery path she trod,
And gave, with woman's deathless trust,
Her being to her God ;
And when, all drooping from the flood,
She rose, like lily's stem,
You thought that spotless brow might wear
An angel's diadem.”

It was in truth a holy scene. Perhaps thou didst
stay till all but thee had gone. Perhaps the
Past came with tender influence over thy chast-
ened spirit ; and, it may be, that, lost in recol-
lection, thou didst linger near that crystal font

“ Till every sound was hushed,
And hallowed musings o'er thy soul
Like spring-swoln rivers rushed.”

What were those musings? Recall them once
again, and let them lead thee in penitence to God.
The words which Conscience uttered then she ut-
ters now :

“ 'Tis better, said the voice within,
To bear a Christian's cross
Than sell this fleeting life for that
Which death shall prove but dross ;
Far better, when yon shriveled skies
Are like a banner furled,
To share in Christ's reproach, than gain
The glory of the world.”

TO

Mrs. Sarah A. Winckard,

RECEIVED, ON PROFESSION OF FAITH, WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 23, 1855,

WHO, THOUGH OFTEN CALLED TO SUFFER IN THE BODY, FINDS
PEACE OF SOUL IN THINKING OF HER "UNSEEN SAVIOUR" AND
OF THE "FAR MORE EXCEEDING AND ETERNAL WEIGHT
OF GLORY" THAT SHALL FOLLOW THE "LIGHT AFFLICTIONS,
WHICH ARE BUT FOR A MOMENT,"
IN THIS VALE OF TEARS.



DISCOURSE VII.

LOVE TO AN UNSEEN SAVIOUR.

“Whom, having not seen, ye love.”—1 PETER, i. 8.

MAN seems to have been created for affection. To give love, and to receive it, appears to be the end and aim of his existence. But he errs often as to the objects on which he may bestow affection; and as to the kind and the amount of love which he may rightly feel for each. The spiritual insight which once was his, has been destroyed; and now, seeing every object through a false, deceitful medium, he often chooses wrongly, and expends the treasures of his heart on things unworthy his attention. His mental vision is distorted; and false, delusive images float across the mirror of his mind. His soul yearns to cling to something that shall support it in its moments of deepest need; it longs, like the ivy for some towering oak, round whose sturdy trunk it may

wrap its loving tendrils, and draw from thence a power not its own. Too often, alas! the soul mistakes; and twines itself around a fragile reed, which bends, and breaks beneath the unwonted weight.

Love is an outpouring of the soul. As there are different degrees, so there are different kinds, of this affection. Various are the emotions which it excites in the bosom; and strange the acts to which it prompts. We look upon a beauteous landscape from the top of a blue and misty mountain. Before us lies a lovely vale, fresh with the air of early morn, and all a-glow with the beams of the rising sun, which shine in brightness on its grassy garment, and light up every spangling dew-drop with serene and pearly ray. We love the sight: the heart is elate with pleasure, and the eye drinks in the scene with streaming joy. We love the beauteous flower which whispers in the breeze: we love the tinkle of the merry waves, leaping in laughing gayety along their pebbly bed: we love the hum of insects buzzing in the air, and the song of warbling music, trembling in the grove. We love to look upon the far-off city, with its tall spires, its cupolas gleaming in the sun, its clouds of smoke hovering over

in wreathing canopies, and the din of its myriad voices pealing ever like the distant sound of many waters. We love the vaulted sky, when lit up with its starry flood of silver flame; and we love to listen, in silent thought, to the melodious rush of its golden spheres. We love to stand upon the ocean's shore, and look forth, at midnight's calm and lonely hour, upon its gently-heaving waves.

Such scenes as these afford us all delight. We love them with an affection which is involuntary—with the love which natural beauty must call forth, in every soul that is alive to sights and sounds of harmony. But, as the eye disports itself, and the warm feelings go out in love, the heart may have no sense of affection to Him who has lit up the world with beauty, and spread the star-spangled carpet of the skies. The pious soul, it is true, will image forth its God in every time of contemplation; but the heart that has not been touched by grace divine, will never think of Him who is the life and soul of all. At least, it will never picture to itself the perfect God of the Bible—that august and reverend Being who is beauteous in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. The unbeliever frames another God,

whom the Scriptures do not know—a deity too merciful to be just, too tender-hearted to be prudent, too easily moved from his sworn purposes to govern even the world, much less the universe; and, crowning him, with praise opprobrious, as Lord of all, falsely calls his man-made deity the God

“ Whose hand the lightning forms,
Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms.”

This is the poet's, this is Fancy's God—the God of him who says, with pantheistic meaning,

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul.”

Not so thinks and feels the man who believeth in Jesus. He, also, loves the outward beauty; but his busy imagination soars away to regions far remote. Climbing up, in thought, the pearly steps of Nature, he stands a moment on the battlements of Heaven; then, winging his airy flight beyond, he plumes afresh his tired pinions on the throne of Him

“ Who framed
Mankind to be one mighty family,
Himself our Father, and the world our home.”

He sees the God of the Bible in every scene of nature. He bids all things raise a song of thank-

fulness to Him who rules the universe. He bids Chamouny's vale rejoice and clap its hands, and speaks to the ice-crowned summit of the Alps these words of sweet command :

"Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God."

Nature's most beautiful objects return to us no answering love. We look at them with musing pleasure, but they look not back at us in sweet response. We speak to them, perhaps, but they never speak to us again. The love we bear them, then, is the love of beauty, the love of grandeur, and not the love of benevolence and gratitude. This we can only feel for man, or for a Being that can give, as well as take, affection.

When we turn to the world of human life, we find there, also, objects which excite our love. A generous deed, a kindly word, is pleasing in our sight. The man who acts among his fellows the part of a benefactor—who thinks of others' happiness as well as of his own ; who meets his brother with kindness sparkling in his eye, and words of cheer upon his lip ; whose thoughts are busy with deeds of sweet humanity, and on whose forehead gentle Mercy has left the impress of her

heavenly kiss—such a man the soul admires, and all its better feelings flow forth to him in love. This is the love of moral esteem—an affection excited by the contemplation of moral excellence, which in and of itself is always lovely. Goodness is beautiful in itself; and we can not, when we see it exhibited, restrain, if we would, the feeling that rises within us of deep, sincere, and loving admiration.

The mighty warrior, who summons around him, as if by magic, a million kindred spirits, and storms on in his victorious chariot, as if drawn forward by the sun-god's steeds, over prostrate nations, subjugated provinces, and the ruined wrecks of populous empires, may excite our wonder; and, if our wrongly-tutored minds have been filled with images false of blood-dyed glory, we may shout with unholy rapture his triumphant name, and weave around his head, with ready finger, the gaudy chaplet of earth's renown. The greatness of the man—or, what the world calls "greatness"—dazzles our vision with its splendor, and we bow in homage at his feet. But we love him not. The heart is not touched, and it sends not forth toward that famous warrior the streams of its affection. The im-

agination alone has been wrought upon, and the lower passions of erring humanity.

But, let us take another case of human action, more noble than the other, more useful, and more befitting man's higher nature. A daring adventurer goes forth in search of some shorter passage to the eastern seas. He meets with many hardships; he shudders now with cold amid the icebergs of the pole, and now he melts with equatorial heat; he is lashed by storms; he suffers famine; he is worn down with days of labor, and nights of weary watching. At last he finds the long-sought inlet, and sails in proud success upon the tranquil ocean of the far-off East. He returns to his home. We see his face again, and, as we listen to his story, we feel the pulse beat faster, and our whole breast is filled with admiration. But we do not love. There is nothing here for affection to fasten itself upon, and its deep font remains all placid and unmoved.

Another man goes forth from his home and his kindred to live and to die in a distant land. He builds himself a hut among the dusky Africans, and preaches to the swarthy sons of Ethiopia the Gospel of Christ. Firm he stands, amid persecution, and disease, and want—a self-deny-

ing herald of the Cross; and there he dies, at last, afar from his home, and finds in a foreign clime a foreign grave. We hear the story of his sufferings and of his early death. Our ardent feelings are stirred within us; the eye is dimmed with tears, and the touched heart adds to all its tribute of affection. Admiration is felt, it is true—an admiration based on moral excellence, and altogether worthy the dignity of man; but there rises within us, at the same time, an uncontrollable tide of affection, whose waters well up with ceaseless overflow of love. We would the man were standing beside us in life, that we might thank and bless him in the name of our common humanity; that we might lavish upon him the proofs of our esteem, and show him that *our* heart, at least, felt proud of his existence, and beat for him with throbs of love.

Moral excellence naturally excites in us the love of moral esteem. We love the good man, whether we know him in person, or not; whether he has conferred a favor upon us, or not. A sight of the face of him that is benevolent, calls forth in us the sentiment of esteem; even though we never expect ourselves to receive from him a token of affection. But when that man of ten-

der-heartedness comes to our own home, and ministers to our wants; when he enters our residence, casts around the mild glance of his benignant eye, takes us gently by the hand, and hears from us with willing ear the story of our woe—then does the heart within our bosom beat with a quicker motion, and there plays along its tremulous strings many a bright and holy ray of grateful joy. Then do we feel the workings of the love of moral esteem not only, but the lively throbbings of the love of gratitude. Not only is our benefactor good; but he has lavished upon *us* the treasures of his goodness. We see his benevolence: and what is more, we feel it: it has come to us all warm and glowing with its happy life; it has crossed our humble threshold, and lighted up the darkness of our cheerless dwelling; it has cast a glance benignant on our lone family circle, and has wiped away the tear of sorrow from off our care-worn cheek.

Who among us could refuse to love so kind a benefactor? Lovely in himself, and lovely in his conduct toward us, we can not withhold from him the tribute of our grateful affection. Though he were not such to others as he has been to us—even though his character were not, in general,

such as would excite in others the love which springs from a sense of moral worth—*our* lips can not refuse to praise him for his kindness to us and ours; and *our* soul will not quench the love it feels, and the lively sentiment of responsive gratitude. To others, he may be unworthy; and even to us, in himself considered, he may not deserve our affection; yet he has aided us in the time of our want, he has given us his sympathy in the hour of our deepest need; and, though all men should turn against him, yet will *we* love him still, and seek to throw around him the arms of our protection.

Much more, then, if he who has performed toward us a generous act, and has opened to us the cheering sympathies of his soul, should possess a character lovely in itself, and lovely in the sight of all who can admire virtue in its highest excellence—much more, in such a case, will we feel within our bosoms the swelling emotions of deep and thankful joy. The love of moral esteem will unite with the love of thankfulness; and the two, mingling their sweet waters, will move on, as long as life shall last, with harmonious flow—a perpetual stream of sacred love, a perpetual font of liveliest gratitude and praise.

Now this is just our case as regards the Friend we have in heaven. He came to us in our misery. His soothing hand was placed beneath our sinking head, and He relieved our wretchedness and woe. Deep were the wounds which Satan had made upon our soul; but Jesus healed them all. The burning fever of iniquity rolled with fiery current along our veins, consuming our restless bodies, and wasting all their powers away. The great Physician came, and proffered us salvation's balmy cup. We took and drank; and straightway all the angry tumult that raged within our breast, was hushed to calmness. He stripped us of the robes of Sin, and clad us with the spotless garment of Redemption. He took us out of our dark and gloomy prison-house, and bade us breathe forever the air of heavenly freedom. He drove away our sorrows, and gave us songs in the night. He extracted with soft and gentle hand the sting of Death; and made us, ere yet our summons had come, raise the glad shout of victory over the grave.

The character of Jesus is the most perfect of which history, sacred or profane, any where gives us an account. He possesses every excellence, every virtue, in the fullness of completion.

Purity itself is not more pure than was Jesus of Nazareth. The words which fell from His lips were chaster than the driven snow. His acts were purer far than the transparent icicle which hangs in lustrous whiteness from the mountain rock, and transmits without a tinge the moon's soft rays of silvery light.

So perfect in character, so pure, so lovely, Jesus came to earth for our sake; and, robing all His excellencies in a human form, He lived for us a life of stainless virtue, and died for us a death upon the cross. Long, long had men been "plunged in a gulf of dark despair;" and there was no eye to pity, no hand stretched forth to save. Jesus saw our lost condition. The kindlings of compassion arose within Him; and in the fullness of His love, He offered Himself a victim to the vengeful knife of rigid Justice. His heart was moved by pity; sympathy wrought upon His kind affections; and He took upon Him all our sin and all our punishment. This was His love to us, manifested to man in all its richness, while yet man lived in sinfulness, and was yet bearing the arms of treasonous rebellion against his lawful Lord and Sovereign.

This, my brethren, was Jesus's love to you. A

perfect Being. He died for your imperfections, and to redeem you from sinfulness in this world, and from its dread punishment in the world to come. Feel you not toward Him, this morning, the liveliest sentiments of gratitude? He is your Heavenly Benefactor; and He has ever given you abundant evidences of His love. Beauty and propriety shine with purest ray from out His sinless character. Precious is His person, which has borne for you the burden of your sins; and in which you have so often seen, by faith, every attribute and every perfection which can make Him lovely and desirable. He is yours—the beloved of your heart—“Whom, having not seen, ye loved,” and joy in Him with joy unspeakable.

So it is; we have not seen Jesus with the eye of the body; but we have seen Him often, by faith, with the eye of the spirit. Christ has been revealed to us in power; and we can no more doubt the fact of His having come into the world, and of His living and dying for sinful humanity, than we can doubt our own existence and the evidence of our senses. We have received the testimony of “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost,” pressed upon us, as it was, by the

power of God's own Spirit; and we have set the seal of our faith upon it, and declared "that God is true." The outward eye has never seen the Saviour; but the inward eye, illuminated by heavenly light, has had a revelation of His wonderful person, and beheld Him, "evidently set forth" in all His goodness and all His majesty. Our Faith, clinging to things "not seen," has laid her hand on Christ; and, gently lifting the shrouding mantle off His face, has revealed to our gladsome spirit His Godhead, and His glory—"the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Many saw Jesus with the eye of the flesh, when He lived and exercised His ministry upon earth; but how few comparatively believe in Him to the salvation of the soul! Despite the charming winningness of His address, the power and earnestness of His solemn appeals to the heart, the quietness of His manner, the touching plaintiveness of His pathos—His rich, copious, gentle but burning eloquence—many that saw and heard Him in life, did not believe upon the Son of God. They felt the power of the truths which He pressed home so eloquently upon their consciences; they felt the winning power of His holy life; but

pride restrained them from giving Him their full affection. Jesus was poor, sprung from lowly parentage; had come out of Nazareth; had chosen the lowly for His disciples; and was often found in company with the sinful, the erring, and the lost. He was rejected by the priests and rulers of the nation; and it could not be possible, they thought, that He, the meek and lowly, should be the promised Messiah, the Son of God. They began to doubt His truthfulness; and then, left as they were to blindness and hardness of heart, they "despised and hated Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard."

But others believed, and came to Jesus, like Peter, to receive from Him the words of eternal life. The Apostles, Mary and Martha, Mary of Magdala, Simon the leper, and Lazarus, and yet other disciples—many of whom, having had "much forgiven them, loved Him much"—gathered often round His person, and sat in adoring wonder at His feet. They loved to minister to his earthly necessities—to supply His earthly wants—while he nurtured them with the bread which came down from Heaven, and pressed to their thirsty lips the brimful chalice of redeeming love. The blind whom He had cured,

the deaf, the halt, the maimed, the lunatic, all loved the sound of His footstep, and testified their gratitude in songs of praise.

These all loved the Saviour, having seen Him with the eye of sense. We love Him, having seen Him with the eye of the spirit. Thomas believed, because he saw; we have not seen, and yet we have believed. "Blessed" are we then: Jesus Himself has called us "blessed." And we are happy indeed; for God, "according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." We see the Saviour seated on the throne of His mediatorial glory, ruling by His Spirit in the hearts of men. "All power in Heaven and in earth" is committed to His hands, and "principalities and powers" are each subject to His supreme control. In Him are centered "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" and He sways the mild scepter of eternal love. He travels not now a wanderer upon the bleak and barren earth; He shivers not now on the lonely mountain-top, amid the midnight's chilling air. He groans, He bleeds, He dies, no more. He sits enthroned in majesty, highly exalted at the right hand of God—the "King of kings, and

Lord of lords." Yet is He still our brother; human nature united with the divine—a High-Priest that can have compassion on our infirmities; for He, in His own body, has felt the woes, the weaknesses, the trials, the temptations of humanity.

None of us in this assembly have ever seen the Saviour with the bodily vision. But this matters little, if we have beheld Him with the eye of the mind; and, having seen, have felt the riches of His love shed abroad in the heart. You have all seen Him; for He has often been held up to your view from the pulpit; you have read of Him, again and again, in the Bible; and, sometimes, when the Spirit of truth has hovered over you with celestial wing, you have beheld Him, in thought, beckoning to you from the skies. Some of you have heeded the whisperings of His voice, and have obeyed the heavenly summons. But some have not. Oh, why, ye hardened souls, will ye still refuse the love of Christ? So much has He done to rescue you from death; and now He still entreats you to accept from Him the offer, so free, so gracious, of peace and pardon. The Heavens are opened to thee, oh, thou impenitent; and, if thou wilt accept the

offer, life and immortality are thine. The loving countenance of thy God smiles sweetly on thee from the sunny sky. Streams of His love flow down upon thee: open thy heart, and drink in the dews of endless joy.

Feel we each, to-day, the love of Jesus shed abroad in our souls? Can we each say, this morning, "Oh, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Search your hearts: put the question fearlessly; and mark the answer. If you love the Lord, 'tis well: if not, what is your condition now? I raise the note of warning in your ears to-day. Would that I could wing a heavenly arrow, and speed it to thy heart, oh thou ungrateful, doubting, disbelieving, soul. Thou lovest not thy Saviour: thou seest no beauty in Him, no loveliness; and never hast a thought of gratitude. Knowest thou not on what a dangerous, slippery place thy feet now stand? Hear the words of condemnation: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed." Thou art accursed now: thy doom is sealed; and, if thou repent not speedily, I know not how soon God may summon thee to judgment, and thy trembling soul stand all pale and speechless at His dreadful bar.

Most beautiful, Christian brethren, is our Beloved; and most precious is His blood in the sight of His saints. His love to us is "stronger than death." He is the Vine: we are the branches. He is our Heavenly Teacher, our Guide, our Comforter, our sure Support, our All in All. Oh, I love Thee, Son of God. Thou art my Brother, Friend, Redeemer. Give me Thee, that I may tread the path of glory. Oh, I would be Thine forever:

"Loose me from the earth's inclosure—from the sun's
 Contracted circle set my heart at large;
 Eliminate my spirit, give it range
 Through provinces of thought yet unexplored;
 Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
 Creation's golden steps, to climb to Thee."

Miss Annie B. Payne,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 8, 1855,

WHO FEELS THAT THE WORLD IS PASSING AWAY WITH ALL ITS
VANITY AND POMP, AND THAT IT IS IN THE CELESTIAL
PARADISE ALONE, WHERE, AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND,
THERE ARE PLEASURES FOREVER MORE.

DISCOURSE VIII.

NON-CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD:

AS TO ITS SPIRIT, MAXIMS, JUDGMENTS.

“Be not conformed to this world.”—ROM., xii. 2.

THE Christian who conforms to the world, every day of his life, both in thought and in practice, is often the very man who least suspects it. The human heart is strangely deceitful; and our own wishes often spread a false coloring over the things which surround us, and over the imaginations which are conceived in secret in our breasts. Few men know themselves even in the leading points of their character; for of all studies the study of self is the hardest, and the least frequently attempted by man. He can readily discern the faults of others; but is totally blind to glaring defects which exist in himself: he can see the mote in the eye of his brother, but can not discover the beam in his own. He will cherish some loved iniquity in his heart, be-

cause others have called it virtue ; and you can hardly convince him, when once the guest has been admitted, that he has been deluded, and received a demon, and not an angel, to his bosom. No man knoweth himself as he ought ; and even in the Christian's heart there is, too often, a concealed chamber in which lies hidden some unsuspected sin.

It is hard to convince the worldly-minded believer that, in his spirit and his conduct, he is conforming to the world. Because he runs not to "the same excess of riot" that others do ; because he is not so reckless and dissipated as many around him are, but keeps within the bounds prescribed by conventional decorum—bounds always variable, and very often carried beyond the limits of reason and propriety—he supposes that he can not rightly be called a worldling ; but thinks himself a Christian man who makes a lawful use of the innocent enjoyments which God has granted to mortals to sweeten the bitterness of life. He forgets that he has made pleasure the end of his existence ; and that his question has not been, at each successive sunrise, "How may I serve my God the best to-day ?" but rather, "How may I pass this day with greatest pleasure

to myself?" He forgets that his very service of God—perhaps the prayer which, in the early morn, he breathed upward toward Heaven, perhaps the outward Christian duties which he performed during the day, perhaps the interest which he took in the exercises of the sanctuary—sprung from no heartfelt love to Jehovah; but from the gratification which was afforded his senses, or from worldly policy, or from a consciousness that society itself, irreligious as it is, expects and requires that he who has publicly confessed the Saviour, should wear the outward livery of his Master.

If the worldly-minded believer in Christ would only be honest with himself, he would soon discover his danger, and retrace his steps. If he would only seize hold of the motive of every act, and scrutinize it, he would soon see how evil and how ungrateful are the thoughts of his heart. He would find that his soul has been lost and swallowed up in his senses, and that his senses have been absorbed in the world. He would find that, though he converses sometimes with God, he converses far more frequently and more gladly with the world; that he talks now and then of God, but very often, and every where,

of the world; that he plans once in a while for God, but every day for the world; that he thinks occasionally of God, but habitually of the world. Discovering this, he could not do otherwise than repent, if he has ever truly known the grace of God; and, repenting, he would seek for pardon from his offended Saviour, saying unto Him, as we might each say this morning, "O Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against Thee."

It does not become us who are followers and imitators of Christ, to be conformed to the world. The Christian and the worldling are wholly diverse in character. Inwardly, as to mind and morals, they have hardly a feature in common; being as unlike in all their leading traits of disposition as are the lion and the lamb. The Christian lives in and for his God: the worldling, disguise it as he may, lives in and for himself. The Christian looks to Heaven for the final fullness of his joy: the worldling receives all his on earth. The Christian is a philosopher: the worldling is a madman; for he prefers profit and pleasure to virtue, the world to God, earth to heaven, time to eternity: he pampers his body, and starves his soul.

When the Apostle Paul tells us, "Be not conformed to this world," he bids us not to adopt and imitate its *spirit*. The same apostle reminds us, in another place, that "we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God." Once we were possessed of the spirit of the world; and, moved by its power, we fashioned our faith and conduct after those, and those alone, who were governed by like principles and like impulses. The promptings of corrupt and selfish nature were implicitly followed; and earth was made the theater of all our undertakings—the end and aim of all our wishes and desires. The mind, oppressed with its heavy tenement of clay, and fettered and clogged by low pursuits, never soared away toward Heaven, nor caught a glimpse of the glory and beauty of the Paradise above. Now we have received another spirit—"the spirit which is of God;" and this has changed our views, our character, our aims, and all our hopes. Recreated by this spirit, we have acquired a taste for other and better things than those which once gratified our carnal senses. What we then deemed pleasure, we now think misery; and what was once considered irksome, has now become a joy. Where Satan once

governed, God now exercises supreme control ; and the rule of the Passions has given place to the sway of the Spirit.

The Christian man, therefore, can not, without sin, conform to the spirit of the world. Having been redeemed from his vain, and frivolous, and unprofitable conversation as a worldling, by the precious blood of Jesus, he can not obey again the promptings of the "carnal mind," which "is enmity with God," without renouncing his hope of salvation through the merits of a crucified Saviour. He who is ruled by the spirit of the world, and he who obeys the spirit implanted within him by God, are as much unlike as the eagle and the mole. The one—the mole—burrows in the ground, and shrinks instinctively from the warmth and light of day. It plows its blind course among the roots, and rocks, and sands, of earth ; and sees and hears nothing of all that is being done above by other creatures of a nobler mold. The other—the eagle—rises on buoyant pinions into the upper ether ; looks with unshrinking eye into the face of the sun, and rides serenely and majestically on the clouds of heaven. He flaps his broad wing over the mountain-top, and soars in safety above the storm. Beneath

him rolls the world—a petty sphere enveloped in a mist of ignorance and folly ; and all on fire within with the roaring elements of speedy destruction. Above him, and around him, is the wide universe of God ; and far away, almost beyond the reach of sight, the heavenly Paradise. What is earth to one who has caught a glimpse of such a prospect ? What are the pursuits, the pleasures, the employments of those who live on earth, to one who sees that they all are vanity ; who knows that the world is passing away, and that heaven alone abideth forever ?

The worldling thinks only of himself. The world is his portion, and he means to enjoy it. He seeks the wealth of earth, that he may purchase therewith the honors or the pleasures of earth. He rises early, and retires late to bed ; he labors, he toils ; he contrives, he schemes, he plans, that he may amass a fortune. He succeeds, perhaps ; for “ the diligent hand,” be it Christian or not, “ maketh rich.” His store-house is full : plenty surrounds him ; and his coffers are bursting with gold. He keeps it, it may be, for show ; for his proud heart is elated when he thinks that men point to him, and say, “ That is the rich banker ; he ’s worth a million.” Perhaps his love

of pleasure is stronger than his love of applause; and he expends his hoarded wealth in the gratification of his appetite and passions. In either case, self is the end of all his thoughts; the pampering of his selfish vanity, or the feeding of his selfish lusts.

Suppose, however, the man does not succeed, with all his diligence, and toiling, and slaving, in accumulating a fortune. How disappointed he is! how bitter in his expressions against the course of Providence; how envious in his feelings toward those whose labors have been crowned with better success! how jealous, and irritable, and unhappy in his moroseness! Or if, again, after he has attained his end, he feels his purse weigh heavy in his pocket, and thinks that he has opened a mine from which, when its coin grows low, it may always be replenished, God should please to close the mine, and make him penniless, how crushed his spirit! how disappointed his hopes! What comfort has he, after the severity of his toil? He has lost his all: the objects of his worship have been taken away: his mouth is full of cursing, and his heart of murmuring and desponding bitterness.

None of this is true in the case of the right-

mind Christian. Though diligent in his worldly calling, he is not one of those that hasten to be rich. He is prudent, careful, laborious; and, if God prosper him, he is thankful. His gains he manages as the steward of his Heavenly Master; knowing well that the day cometh in which he must render a full and true account of his receipts and his expenditures; and knowing, too, that "to whom much is given"—whether of money, or of talent, or of time, or of influence—"from him much shall be required." If he meet with losses, he bears them cheerfully, because they come from God. If his fortune be taken away, he gives not up to despair; for his heart tells him that his best treasure is safe; locked up, and kept securely, in the deepest vault of Heaven's unfailing Bank.

The mere worldling never looks beyond this earth. The future is carefully banished from his mind; and in his mad intoxication, he would fain persuade himself that "the life to come" is all a dream. Debased in spirit, and bedwarfed in soul, he crawls upon the earth, and knows no pleasure, scarcely, that the brute may not, and does not, feel. The veriest toys amuse him; puppets tricked out and dressed to catch his

fancy. The rattle of the idiot is pleasing to his ear; and he calls it music. The pranks and capers of the wild buffoon afford him a fund of pleasure: he thinks the fool a wise man, and deems the madman sane.

Not so the Christian. He spurns the earth, if offered as his only portion. Worldly pleasures he despises: he will not feed on husks, nor grovel in the dust. All that earth contains is mean and low, and poor, and sordid, in his estimation, as compared with the eternal possessions and joys which are laid up for him in "the better Land." The earth will answer his present bodily wants; but there are deep spirit-yearnings which earth can never satisfy. He is always thinking of Heaven; and, even when the world is most alluring to his senses, his heart still longs for the higher joys; and, sometimes, he can not help breaking forth in the words of the exile:

"Although my body dwelleth here,
And my weary feet here roam,
My spirit and my hopes are still
In thee, my own loved Home."

The Christian must not conform to the world in its *maxims*. The world's standard of morality is a very low one; and, withal, very variable.

He that adopts it will find himself often come in direct conflict with the morality of God. The world is a wretched judge of right and wrong : it often calls bitter sweet, and sweet bitter ; evil good, and good evil. What it wishes to recommend, to that it gives a virtuous name ; and men, deceived, accept it as genuine, and true. Many an eagle, bright outside, but all copper within, is circulated freely in society, and taken without suspicion, because that cunning mint-master, Fashion, has stamped some lying superscription on its face. I have seen handfuls of these eagles in the pockets of a Christian ; and have heard him ring and chink them, and saw that he supposed them genuine gold. He never thought to test their weight, and try their taste and odor. Sometimes a friend has shown him they were counterfeit ; and that, in getting them, he has spent his strength and his labor for naught. Sometimes he has passed them off on others as pure and legal coin ; and has not discovered, till they were gone, the stain they left upon his vesture, his hands, and, worse than all, upon his soul.

The maxims of the world are not the maxims of Christianity, nor are they the maxims of reason. I believe that at least one half the current

worldly maxims of our day—acted upon every where among us, in business, in society, abroad and in the family, and, too often, I am sorry to say, by men who profess to follow the unerring Guide-book of Heaven—are radically defective, or totally false.

To enumerate these maxims, and examine their character and tendency, would take more time than I can command, or you can spare, and the work, when done, would fill a volume. Did you ever reflect on them, my friends, when you have heard men repeat them, or seen men act them out in their conduct? They are numerous—some written, but more, perhaps, unwritten—and they are very strange to have had their birth, and found their advocates, in a Christian land. Where in the Bible is it said: “Love thy friend till thou thinkest he insults thee, and then wash out the insult in his blood?” Where is it written: “Thou mayest hate thine enemy, and do him all the harm thou canst?” Where is it said: “Thou mayest make laws to punish an offender by the regular and known tribunals of the country; but when thy wrath is kindled because the wrong has fallen on thee, thou mayest inflict the punishment with thine own avenging hand?” Where

is it recorded: "Thou mayest take the life of thy fellow-man, if, at the same time, thou givest him a chance to deprive thee of thine?" Where does the Bible say: "The brave man is his own avenger?" or where: "A man of honor will never endure an affront?"

Where is recorded in Holy Writ: "All is fair in trade;" or, "Let every man look to his own interest;" or, "Charity begins at home;" or, "Take care of thyself, let others suffer as they may;" or, "Make money honestly, if it may be; if not, make money by any means?" Where does the Bible say: "He that steals a coat from a private man is a thief, but he that defrauds a public institution is not a thief, but only a defaulter?" On what page of the Scriptures is it written: "He that fails for a hundred, and can not discharge his debts because he has not a penny left him, is a dishonorable man, and is not worthy of mercy; but he that fails for a million, and 'pays out' at ten cents on the dollar, keeping fifty in his private cash-box, is a gentleman, and worthy of continued confidence and credit?"

Where in the Bible is it said: "He that committeth a small offense against God's law shall be pardoned; but he that committeth a great

one shall be punished;" or where: "It is permitted to man to kill the time that hangs heavy on his hands;" or where: "Youth is the season of pleasure;" or where: "Enjoy thyself while thou mayest;" or where: "To be out of the fashion is to be out of the world?" In what part of the Scriptures is it recorded: "Thou mayest do as others do?"

I could go on thus for some time yet, and then leave many worldly maxims unenumerated. Of those which I have mentioned, I do not mean to say that all who are not professed believers in Christ receive them and act them out in their conduct. Far from it. I know many men whom I greatly esteem—men who are not believers in Jesus (would to God that they were!)—whose morality would put to blush the morality of many a professing Christian, and whose strict integrity and unflinching honesty, in public and in private life, no one who knows them can doubt. I adduce them as maxims current in the world, acted upon every day before our eyes by many from whom we have a right to expect better things, and some of them so interwoven with the life and practice even of what is called good society, that it seems impossible to tear

them from the minds and hearts of men, and send them back, branded with dishonor, to the foul place where their malignant author dwells. They are Satanic maxims, every one. Some of them were born and nurtured in the deepest recess of Abaddon's fiery brain, whence issuing, they came a demon troop, hot and hissing, from the world below. They are foreigners and aliens here. Shall we, the servants of Christ, receive them as friends and clasp them to our breasts? No. We will send them back to the regions of darkness, and bind them there in fetters and in adamantine chains.

The Christian must not be conformed to the world *in its ideas of the true and the good*. What do the potsherds of the earth know of truth? All their knowledge which they have not obtained from the Bible, is only splendid ignorance; for it tells them nothing certain of man's eternal destiny; reveals not the way of salvation; and lifts not the curtain which sin has drawn around the mouth of the tomb. "What is truth?" said Pilate once, in sneering mockery, to Him that is "the Way, the Truth, the Life." The same question asks the World to-day. It is ever swinging in uncertainty. What standard has it

of Truth? None. Some point you triumphantly to Reason, and tell you, "There's the test!" But Reason, alas! has never been able to answer the most important question which man has asked her, and asked her on his knees. Nor does she, on simple queries, return to all the self-same answer. She wavers often, and equivocates, and stammers, and gives responses which none can understand.

The world has but little knowledge of the Truth; and the little which it has, can not be safely trusted. They who have God's Book of Wisdom Eternal, need never ask the world the question, "What is Truth?" Who would be guided by a dim and flickering taper, when he may be led by the clear and quenchless light of the sun? Who would choose the foolishness of the world, when he may attain the wisdom which is of God? The world knows not the truth; else would it long ago have found, and pointed out, the road to happiness, and peace, and joy.

Neither is the world correct in its estimate of good. It often mistakes; calling that good which is evil; and him good, who is only ambitious, and aspiring, and vain. The truly good, and virtuous, and honorable, and noble, it does

not understand ; only so far as it has learned it from the Book of God's Revelation. The man that gives a thousand to some object of charity, though he take it from a full purse, and never feel his loss, is lauded over the land as a pattern of benevolence ; while he who slaves his life away—renouncing all earthly emolument, and living in daily pressure upon a straitened income, rather than leave a work which must be done, for the good of his country, and for the good of his race—lives unnoticed, unaided, uncheered, amid his toils ; and goes down, at length, a martyr, to his grave. The rich planter, who from an income of twenty, bestows a single thousand in benevolence, is praised and extolled for his charity ; while the humble widow, who from her slender pittance saves up, by self-denial, and gives a dollar to the Lord ; is never heard of save in her own little circle—and in the courts of Heaven. The world sees not the motive ; and, therefore, can not tell the true from the false, the good from the bad. Its estimates are one-sided and hasty ; often arbitrary, often unjust. The Christian can not trust its judgment ; and may not, therefore, conform to its opinions of the good and the true.

The spirit of the world is not the spirit which is of God ; its maxims are not the maxims of the Bible ; its judgments are not the judgments of Reason enlightened and guided by Revelation. Then, Christian man, thou mayest not conform thyself to the world. Adopt its spirit, and thou takest to thy bosom the spirit of a dull and sensual, brutish, and melancholy Demon, who will chain thee to earth forever. Adopt its maxims, and thou wilt show among men the power and tendency of some of the vilest principles which have ever emanated from the fruitful brain of the fierce and unholy Abaddon. Adopt its judgments, and thou shalt go forth in doubt and uncertainty upon thine earthly mission ; and, dying, leave it unaccomplished.

“ Be not conformed to this world,” brethren ; “ but be ye transformed ” into the image of God. The earth is not, as it now exists, to be yours forever : it can never satisfy the deep longing and thirsting of your immortal souls. The celestial Paradise alone can give you perfect, full, unalloyed, enjoyment. Let go your hold, then, upon the world, and grasp more firmly the jasper battlements of Heaven. Never be tempted for a moment to think the world can yield you solid

joy. It never can. Some who thought they loved the Lord, have tried its happiness: they have quaffed from the cup of its forbidden pleasures; and, having quaffed, have died. "Earth's cup is poisoned; her renown, most infamous; her praise, reproach; . . . her wisdom, blind; her gain, eternal loss; her hope, a dream; her total sum, her all, most utter vanity." Oh, love her not; embrace her not; else, in your very arms, she'll turn a loathsome, putrid, corpse, and, with the hollow eyes of Death, transfix you with her horrid stare.

What dost thou mean, earth-loving Christian—nay, not Christian, but Son of Belial; and what meanest thou, oh, worldling? Knowest thou not, that thou art hastening to perdition? Rock conscience, if thou canst, asleep; forget thy God, and forget eternity; think of Time alone, and of the false, delusive world: go out in thy folly, and in thy madness, if thou wilt: "Walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

"Strive, labor to the last, to shun the truth;

Strive, labor to the last, to slay thyself:

Turn desperate, shudder, groan, blaspheme, and die;

Then sink—where canst thou else?—to endless woe,
And drink God's wine-cup of eternal wrath."

And shall this be? God forbid, my friend, my brother. Repent; return to the Lord; and receive thy pardon. Oh, sink not in the ocean of "tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless, woe." Tread the world indignantly beneath thy feet; and trample on all its "prides, ambitions, hopes, desires." Turn thou to God, and say,

"Lord God, Thy will be done—
Thy holy Will—howe'er it cross mine own."

Then will Jehovah smile in love; and, giving thee His Spirit, bid thee live to all eternity—a sinner pardoned, justified, and saved.

TO

Mrs. Frances A. Murray,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 27, 1855,

IN CHEERFUL OBEDIENCE TO HER DIVINE MASTER;

AND TO

Mrs. Louisa B. Betancort,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 22, 1855,

AND MADE TO REJOICE, THEN AS NOW, IN THE HOPE OF
BLESSEDNESS ETERNAL.

DISCOURSE IX.

NEGLECTING THE "GREAT SALVATION."

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"—HEB., ii. 3.

THERE was once a King who gave a marriage-feast to his well-beloved Son. He sent out invitations in abundance to the wedding; but those whom he invited did not come. Again, he sent forth his messengers, to tell them who had been bidden to the wedding: The feast is prepared; the oxen and fatlings are killed, "and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." They who were bidden were subjects of the King; they had received many favors at his hands, and had enjoyed the special friendship of his Son. But, notwithstanding all this, they "made light of" the invitation of their Sovereign: they turned a deaf ear to the voice of his messengers, "and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise." Some did worse than neglect

his invitation : they rejected it with scorn ; and, seizing the King's servants, " entreated them spitefully and slew them." The monarch heard of this shameful ingratitude, and " was wroth." Sending forth his armies, he destroyed those who had murdered his messengers, " and burned up their city." Not a soul was left alive ; they who neglected the King's invitation, no less than they who ill-used his servants, perishing amid the flames in one common destruction.

The King who made this marriage-feast, was Jehovah ; the Son, in whose honor it was given, was Jesus of Nazareth ; they for whom it was prepared, were God's chosen people, the Jewish nation. The same wedding-feast stands ever ready, under the Gospel dispensation, for all that will accept the invitation of Heaven's gracious King. God invites to it every day by His chosen messengers ; sending forth His servants to proclaim, every where, and unto all men, " Come unto the marriage." In some places, even now, the messengers are ill-treated and slain ; and every where their invitation is made light of by many, or regarded with disdain. Men hear it, and go their ways, " one to his farm, another to his merchandise." But God puts His seal upon

them—the seal of condemnation, which dooms them to everlasting destruction from His presence and from the glory of His power. They die, they go hence, and receive their "just recompense of reward."

The wedding-feast of the Gospel is the feast of salvation. The banquet has been prepared for all men; and all are invited to come, to eat, and be filled. God spreads this heavenly feast for us. He has long displayed it before our eyes; and His messengers have long invited us to enter the banqueting-house, and feast upon the oxen and fatlings so richly provided for us by redeeming love. The cup of salvation is freely uplifted to our thirsty lips; and we are kindly asked to drink its sparkling waters until our soul is fully satisfied. A few accept the invitation, enter gladly within God's banqueting-house, and eat with joy the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Far more—by much the greater number of those who hear the message which bids them come—make light of the gracious invitation of Heaven's kind King, and, excusing themselves for non-compliance, neglect the wedding-feast which the Father has prepared. Week after week, day after day, they hear the invitation, "All things

are ready, come unto the marriage ;” and yet they will accept it not. The Spirit says, “ Come ;” the Bride, the Church of Christ, says, “ Come ;” every one that has eaten of the feast says, “ Come ;” and yet they will not come. They “ all with one consent” begin to make excuse ; they make light of the invitation ; hearing, but not obeying, and, turning each away, while yet the message is sounding in his ears, to his worldly pleasures, or his worldly pursuits. Oh, they see not the tempest of anger that is gathering round Jehovah’s brow ; they see not the fiery thunderbolts writhing in His hand, as if endowed with life, and eager to leap forth and blast them with devouring fire. They whisper to each other, “ Peace and safety ;” and are all unconscious of the coming woe. But soon—too soon—the clouds will burst above their heads ; the lightnings will pierce their palpitating bosoms ; and the storm of God’s eternal vengeance, will fall from heaven, and engulf them in a deluge of waters, ever burning yet unconsumed, and ever-thickening darkness.

God has prepared a “ great salvation.” It was first proclaimed by the Lord Jesus, and secured by His atoning death ; and then—after Jesus was

exalted to glory—it was established on firm foundations by those who heard Him while He exercised His earthly ministry—God bearing them witness, and proving the truth of their testimony, "both with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and with gifts of the Holy Spirit." Since that time, millions have felt its power to give peace and happiness in life, to comfort and console in death, and to fill the soul with joy unutterable and unbounded in eternity.

This precious salvation has often been offered to you. The Bible has offered it; some tract, sent on a mission of love, has offered it; some book, penned by one who has himself tasted of the sweet waters of redemption, has offered it; some painting, telling to the eye, like the panorama of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, the story of salvation, has offered it; some Christian, burning with a desire to rescue a soul from death, has offered it in the winning tones of private friendship; some preacher, speaking from the sacred desk, like a faithful watchman on the walls of Zion, has offered it, now in words of plaintive supplication, and now in words of echoing thunder. The Church of God, uttering her thousand pleading accents, has offered it; the Spirit of

God and Christ, moving within the heart, has offered it; the heavens, the earth, the air, the sea, each has offered it; saying all, in one united voice—now whispering to the soul in its times of meditation, and now pealing in notes of deafening loudness in the ear—“Flee ye from the wrath to come; flee ye from the City of Destruction to the Mountain of Salvation; flee ye, flee, to the ever-open fountain of redemption: Come ye, come; ‘Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.’” Thus has the Gospel of Salvation been freely, fully proclaimed to each of you; pardon for past offenses has been promised, and an eternity of bliss.

It is a “truth worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” That truth has been often preached to you, and it has been pressed upon you in various ways, and by various considerations. You know that you are transgressors against God’s holy Law; that by nature you are sinful; that there is no health nor soundness in you; and that, if judged in righteousness, you must each stand condemned in the sight of a just God. You know that the

sentence of death eternal has been pronounced against all the children of men, because all have sinned and come far short of the requirements of God's holiness and truth. But you know also that the Lord has provided a remedy for sin, and has opened a way of pardon for transgression. He has set forth His own beloved Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, to make atonement for all iniquity, and to be the Saviour of every one that trusts in Him for redemption. Christ has become the Author of eternal salvation to all them that believe. This truth, so consoling to all that feel the burden of their guilt, and to all that would free themselves from the just sentence of eternal condemnation—this truth, so worthy of acceptation—has been sounded again and again in your ears, and every agency which God makes use of in His moral government has been employed to press it home upon your conscience and upon your heart, and to wake within you an earnest desire for deliverance from sin's cruel thralldom, and an eager longing for eternal life. The danger of delaying to make your peace with God has been urged upon you in all seriousness—he who pressed it, pointing you to life's fearful brevity, its uncertainty, and

to thousands upon thousands who, putting off the day of reformation, have sought too late for pardon, and gone despairing down to a dark and hopeless tomb. The certainty of earth's destruction has been proved before you, and the terrors of God's coming wrath have been depicted—the awful horrors of that dreadful day when a Saviour, long neglected, will come with flaming fire, to take vengeance upon all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. The glories of Heaven, its transcendent happiness, its unbounded bliss, have all been described, time and again, until, perhaps, you have felt a momentary wish to possess its rapturous pleasures, and to taste of its undecaying joys. All the splendors which shine in radiant brilliancy around the golden throne of God, all the lustrous beauty which glows in the face of the Son, all the effulgent glories which beam forth from every thing in the celestial Paradise, have been portrayed to you; and, gathered together in one luminous mass of fiery brightness, have been thrown in glowing flashes across your vision, and made to light up every darkened chamber of your soul. The powers of the world to come have seized upon you, and you have felt their mighty work-

ings in the inmost recess of your captivated heart. Earth has seemed as nothing; Heaven has robed itself in glory, and wreaths of never-fading joy. There was within you a moving toward faith in Jesus, and there was a moving toward repentance unfeigned and sincere.

Thus, in various ways, and at various times, has salvation been offered to each of you, in all its freeness, and all its fullness; and such, perhaps, have been your feelings. I can not think that any one now present, however hardened, however inclined to disbelief, has heard every offer of pardon and redemption all unmoved. Every man that carries in his bosom one spark of humanity—a single spark left burning amid the dying embers of corruption—must have felt that spark fanned to a new life by the breathings of the Holy Spirit, moving like a mild zephyr over placid waters, across the surface of his soul. There must have been occasions in the experience of every one of you, when the truth of God commended itself to your conscience; when you felt condemned; when you feared to meet the King of Terrors; when the thought of God's tribunal, with its open books, its stern Judge, its crowding witnesses, its grim executioners of Jehovah's just-

ice, appalled your heart, and thrilled your whole being with tremblings and shudderings of profoundest awe. There must have been times when Heaven was most inviting; when you felt that earth's decaying pleasures, its empty honors, and all the glitter of its wealth and pomp, are but as dross and vanity when compared with the ever-during bliss, the unfading glories, the undecaying treasures, of God's eternal Paradise. The Word of the Spirit has, more than once, come home to you with power, and you have felt the holy drawings of Love divine.

Thus has salvation been freely offered you each; and you have, at times, been moved to its acceptance. But many of you have not embraced it, in spite of the pleadings of God's ministers, in spite of the pleadings of the Holy Spirit. You have neglected it; putting off to some future time the day of your repentance. You neglect it yet; and now, this day, after all the admonitions of Jehovah's providence, and all the warnings and solicitations of His Spirit, you are still unrecconciled to God, still enemies of the cross of Christ, still rejecters of the Gospel, still under sentence of condemnation, still hurrying on, with eager haste, to drink the wine-cup of God's eternal wrath.

What folly, what infatuation, what madness, is this? Days, months, years, have passed over thy head, oh, thou neglecter of the Gospel, and found thee yet lingering, in spite of repeated warnings, in the City of Destruction; and there art thou now, having taken never a step on the road that leads to the Heavenly Zion, and less likely than ever to listen to the voice of warning, and flee from the wrath to come. I wonder that thou canst have a moment's peace, a moment's respite from anxiety and fear. I wonder that alarms do not wring without cessation in thine ears by day, and that the night is not made hideous to thee by spectral hauntings from the world of dark despair. Thou art daily despising the mercy of God, daily trampling under foot the blood of Christ, daily resisting the movements of the Spirit of Grace; and, if cut off in the midst of thy sin, canst have nothing to expect but the wrath and vengeance of thine offended God.

Methinks I see Death brandishing his flaming spear. Soon will he lanch it at thy bosom, and transfix thine unexpectant heart. Art thou prepared to stand before thine unrelenting Judge? Oh, no, thou art not. I see it all too plainly. The very thought is horror, and sends a chill, a

freezing tremor, through every vein and fiber of thy frame :

. . . . " Wait awhile, oh Death,
For him who loves this fleeting world too well ;
Wait, till it force his heart to turn away
From its empty promises, and loathe
Its deep hypocrisy. Oh, wait for him
Who has not tasted yet of Heaven's high grace ;
Nor bring him to his audit, all unclothed
With a Redeemer's righteousness."

But why do I ask of death to wait ? He will not hear me ; nor will he hear thee, sinner, when once his fiery glance shall fall upon thee from out the deep cavern of his lurid eye. And what avails his waiting ? If thou hast not yet repented, and if thou wilt not repent to-day, what reason is there to hope that thou wilt *ever* obey the call of Mercy ? God's Spirit will not, does not, always strive with man ; and, perhaps, if resisted by thee to-day, He may take His everlasting flight. Oh, if this be so—if it be true, that Jesus pleads with thee now for the last time, and will knock no more at the door of thy soul—far better would it be for thee, if unrepentant still, to meet thy doom at once, and not increase the load of guilt which will weigh thee down for endless ages in the fiery ocean of eternal woe.

Oh, my God, is it possible? Is there one soul here that is now receiving his last warning? And am I the one to give it? Oh, help me, mighty God. Nerve my arm to hurl a winged shaft—a rankling arrow of soul-conviction—deep, deep, into his steel-girt heart. Let me not speak peace, but war. Let me cry aloud, and spare not; let me lift up my voice like a trumpet, let me shout, "Flee, flee from the wrath to come!" Let me thunder; let me hurl the lightnings, and shoot the arrows of the Almighty: happy, thrice happy, if, by the up-lifted voice of warning, I might shake his hardened conscience, move his careless heart, and pluck him as a brand from everlasting burnings, and soul-devouring flames.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Truly, the salvation which is secured by faith in Christ, is a "great Salvation;" so great, that he who neglects it, when urged upon him, as it is, by heavenly influences which ought to effect his conversion, deserves to perish, and will, if God is true, forever die. It is a Salvation that is full, perfect, free, sure, and eternal. Rich is it in its *fullness*, requiring no addition to make it all harmonious and complete; for it includes pardon, sanctification, and redemption. It is a

perfect Salvation ; as finished in excellence and beauty as the fairest creation of God's fair handiwork. It answers all the demands of Jehovah, and meets all the wants of man ; for it fulfills to the uttermost, yea, it magnifies, every jot and tittle of the violated Law. The obedience of the Son on which it is based, was perfect : the Father was well-pleased with his work and offering ; and Justice was more than satisfied. It is a *free* Salvation. Every one that asks, shall receive it : whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely, without measure, and without stint. Not the worthiest shall receive it, but he that feels his need ; he who is conscious of his guilt, and who, casting off all self-righteousness, trusts solely to the merits of Christ ; who, in all lowliness and deep abasement, asks pardon as a sinner ; and, throwing himself at the feet of Jesus, sobs forth,

“ In my hands no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.”

This Salvation which God has so graciously provided, is *sure* and *everlasting*. The heavens shall vanish like smoke, the earth shall wax old as a garment ; but the Salvation of Jehovah shall be forever, and His righteousness shall not be

abolished. The Father devised the plan of redemption; the Son executed it; the Spirit inclines the hearts of men to receive it; and so the might and wisdom of God, the all-embracing mercy and love of Christ, the power of the Holy Ghost, are all pledged to make it infallible, steadfast, and eternal.

Surely, then, that which I preach is a "great Salvation." It is the end of the Law, and the ornament of the Gospel: it is the heritage and joy of the ransomed, scorned though it may be by the world, and despised, and neglected: it is the wonder of angels, the admiration of glorified saints, and the triumph of spirits of the just made perfect: it is the hope and comfort of the believer, and satisfies all the desires, the wants, and the longings, of his immortal soul—Great, then, is the Salvation which has been secured by the atonement of Jesus. It is great in its Author; and great when viewed as a divine scheme of infinite power, and wisdom, and love. It saves from great iniquity; it delivers from great dangers—dangers which threaten eternal destruction; and exalts to great glories in God's celestial Kingdom.

This Salvation, great as it is, is often neglected.

Men seem intent upon everything else but the securing of their soul's redemption. They toil for honor, they labor for wealth, they hunt the world for pleasure; but they neglect their being's end and aim, the seeking and securing everlasting life. Borne on Time's rapid river, they float along in fancied security, heedless and careless, toward Eternity's boundless sea. Soon they glide—without an oar or sail, to urge their boat along, and without a rudder to steer its course, into the broad ocean of Infinity; and there float on the muttering flood of Acheron, tossed to and fro, until they rot, beneath the raging heat of an ever-burning sky, and then sink down to adamantine chains and pitchy darkness, where black Cocytus rolls its gloomy waves with musky, sullen flow. They remember not that man is mortal; that his life moves ever on toward the silent grave; and that all earthly pomp or boast, grand as it may be for the moment, passes by like a glittering pageant, “a noon-tide shadow, or a midnight dream.” It flashes, it glimmers, and is gone.

This great, this glorious Salvation, I offer you now, I offer it in the name of its Author, in the name of Him who secured it by the shedding of

His blood, and in the name of Him who seals it to every sincere believer in the Son of God. Oh, I would that you might each receive it, and make it your own without delay. Long enough have you neglected it; and the door of Mercy is closing, closing, on its golden hinges. How can you, how dare you, slight this invitation; for "how shall you escape, if you neglect so great Salvation?" He that despised Moses's Law, died without mercy; and how shall they be treated, think you, who slight the Law of Grace, and truth, and love divine? Think not that because you attend the House of God; because you occasionally read the Scriptures; because you, now and then, offer a kind of prayer to the Almighty; because you are upright, moral and useful in society; because you possess by nature feelings of kindness and benevolence, and do not a few good works among men; think not, I say, that any of these virtues, or all of them together, will secure your soul's Salvation. All this you may do, as many before you have done, without knowing any thing of faith in Christ, without loving God, without hating sin, and without that hungering and thirsting after righteousness apart from which no man can attain the holiness which

fits him to see the Lord and reign with Him in Heaven. Faith in Jesus as the Saviour, as your Saviour, can alone secure you forgiveness of sin, and the soul's redemption; such faith as makes you trust your soul to Him, makes you obey all His precepts and commandments, makes you walk in His footsteps, and makes you imitate—as far as human nature aided by the Spirit can—His love, His meekness, His self-denial, His patience, and His earnest, active, unremitting zeal for the glory of God and the highest good of man. I would tear off, if I could, from every one of you, the flaunting, gairish robe of self-righteousness, and hurl it, all tattered and torn, and all begrimed as it is with mire and filth, into the deepest and darkest of earth's caverns; and then, anointing with the oil of gladness, I would array you in the blood-washed robes of everlasting righteousness, and fling around your shoulders the glittering mantle of eternal Salvation.

But you will not suffer me to clothe you in the wedding-garment of praise and joy in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. You gather about you the cloak of self-righteousness, and, enwrapping in the folds of its morality, think yourselves quite safe from the kindling flashes of God's resentful

anger. This will be no shield, no protection, in the day when Christ shall come in majesty to judge the world, riding on the clouds of heaven, and hurling forked lightnings along the sky. Then, in that dread day, when the secrets of every heart shall be laid open, no shield will avail but the "shield of faith;" no garment will cover iniquity, and hide the multitude of sins, but the pure and spotless robe that has been cleansed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Neglect no longer—not for a moment—this great salvation. Time is fleeting by, and eternity is looming up to view. A cataract more fearful than that of Niagara, thunders over the broken rock that ends your earthly life. I know, ye voyagers to eternity's ocean, that the sun is now shining brightly in your firmament; that the stream you navigate glides on with calm and placid flow; and that the shore, on either hand, looks green and gladsome to the eye. But I know, too, that, intent on pleasure within the decorated cabin—whence through the open windows you can only perceive the river banks—you do not see the foaming rapids just ahead, and the thickening mist up-steaming from the seething caldron that boils beneath the precipice. The danger, I tell

you, is imminent. On, on, thunders the steamer which bears you to destruction. Noise and revelry are heard in the cabin—the sound of music, and the time-keeping patter of the mazy dance. Mirth is celebrating her holiday. Merry voices commingle with the sound of laughter, and break in not unpleasing discord upon the harmony of the plaintive harp and loud resounding viol. On dashes the steamer, *on*; and the quick thunderings of her paddles, beating the waves with strokes of more than giant's might, drown the hoarse boomings of the rushing cataract. The pilot sees not the awful whirlpool; for his eyes are heavy with sleep and wine. The captain, rioting with his guests, observes not the uneasy rocking of the vessel, and hears not the strange uproar without. On dashes the steamer, *on*; and now she strikes against a jagged rock. A universal groan is heard: all is confusion and wild dismay. The revelers rush upon the deck; and a scene of horror meets their eye. Just before them yawns the frightful precipice: the foamy waves are leaping all around: the steamer is drifting slowly on, on, to that fearful verge of threatening ruin. In vain the wheels are backed, and put in motion. The paddles are shivered into pieces on the

sunken rocks, and float in broken fragments on ahead, piloting the way to sure destruction. Slowly drifts the wounded steamer on, quivering in every plank, and reckless of the guiding helm. Shouts of anguish rend the skies; and agonizing cries for help rise high above the wild shriekings of escaping steam and the loud din of angry waters shouting for their prey. 'Tis all in vain: man can not, God will not, aid. Slowly turning, with many a groan and tremor, with full broad-side toward the precipice, the steamer surges on; and now, revolving for a minute with arrowy swiftness, she turns prow first again, quivers for a second over the misty void, and plunges head-long down the yawning gulf. Down goes the soul-freighted vessel, down amid the roar of boiling waters, down to the hollow depths of woe. One piercing shriek of agony bubbles up from out the parting waves, and mingles with the cry of horror that bursts from the lips of those who stand all trembling on the shore, and see the fatal plunge. Every soul that was aboard that steamer is lost forever. Mists and foam float up from over the sunken wreck—wreck always whirling in that seething caldron—and the horrid precipice nods ever in fearfulness above.

The name of this vessel is Destruction; and thou art one of her passengers, oh, thou that art neglecting God's "great Salvation." I have told thee of her certain destination, and of thy coming fate. Not yet has she reached the awful precipice; but soon, very soon, she will, and dash with thee to everlasting ruin. Thank God the plunge is not yet made; thank God that the eddies, though smoking and boiling ahead, have not yet seized thee and hurried thee far beyond all hope. But, flee: there is no time for delay. Methinks I now hear the roaring of the cataract's wild surges. Flee, I tell thee; escape for thy life. Betake thee to the long-boat; leap in, and cut the ropes. Haste thee; ply the oar; raise the sail; and steer thee for the "Ark of Refuge." Yonder she floats all beauteous in majesty serene—a palace worthy of the sea—an ark that neither storm nor wave can harm; but which will sail forever, weathering every gale, on the broad bosom of eternity's ocean. Hasten thither. God is her Captain, Christ her Helmsman; and the name which streams in glory from her mast-head, is "Salvation." Go on board; enter in; and be thou saved.

TO

Mrs. Frances Matilda Todd,

RECEIVED, ON PROFESSION OF FAITH, WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 21, 1855,

TO WHOM THE SERVICE OF CHRIST BRINGS PLEASURE FOUND NO
OTHER WHERE; AND WHO, HAVING LEARNED THAT EARTH
IS DECEITFUL AND FALSE, WHILE HEAVEN ALONE
IS TRUE FOREVER, LOVES THE SANCTUARY
OF HER GOD.



DISCOURSE X.

THE NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST SANCTUARY.

“The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”—

PSALM, cxxvi. 3.

A TIDE of tumultuous feelings is swelling in my breast. Dark shadows of the Past move solemnly before my mental vision; radiant images of the Present flash in brightness upon mine eye. Upturned faces of happiness meet my gaze as I look upon this congregation, and I see a gleam of holy joy playing round the features of some that are assembled here. Methinks I almost hear the quick beatings of their heart, and the low whispers of their cheerful soul, saying inly, “The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.”

'Tis true, indeed; Jehovah *hath* done wonders for us, His people. He hath turned our captivity; he hath filled our mouth with laughter, and our tongue with singing. We are like those that

dream: we can scarcely realize that we are the same who so lately mourned over the desolation of our Jerusalem. Not many months since our harps were hung in sadness on the willows; we sat down in the land of the stranger, and "wept when we remembered Zion." Zion—*our* Zion was desolate. Our temple was gone—alienated forever. The song of praise was hushed, and only the sad wail of supplicating prayer was, now and then, upraised to God. The ordinances of the Lord's house had ceased to be administered, and Israel was scattered on every high hill, amid adversity's dark and gloomy day. The voice of the under-shepherd was heard no more, but only the lamentation of a faithful few who met to mourn the desolation of Zion—to sigh over the blasting of cherished hopes that once had filled their souls with happiness and joy.

How is it now? Here is a new Zion; walk about her; "tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following." I see happy faces here to-day that were once enshrouded in sorrow. I see gleaming eyes of joyousness, that were once bedewed with outbursting tears. I see forms now all radiant with gladness which

once were bowed in agony and woe. I see those here to-day, joining in thanksgiving to God, who once implored Jehovah, on bended knee, to restore to His people the joys of His salvation. Sad indeed—most sad, were their outcries of anxious supplication sent up, amid the captivity of Zion, from sobbing hearts and quivering lips, to God: “Oh, Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayers of Thy people? How long, oh Jehovah, wilt Thou not remember Thy servants? Turn us again, oh, God of hosts, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved!”

But now all this is changed. The prayer of faith has been answered. Here is a new temple reared in honor of Jehovah—a temple for all that love to worship in the sanctuary of our God. Surely the day-star from Heaven has visited us; surely the Lord hath redeemed us gloriously from our captivity.

Brethren, ye that mourned for long over the desolation of God’s House; and you, ye daughters of Zion, that once hung your harps so pensively upon the willows, has not Jehovah answered your prayer? Look around you; raise your eye upward to the open ceiling of your almost completed temple, and scan its broad dimensions; fling a

glance around this spacious hall, and examine the noble tabernacle which loving hearts are building for your God. Are not your souls elated with gladness? and do you not feel that Jehovah is now redeeming to you the promise which He spake by the mouth of the prophet: "The Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places, and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody." Yes, Thou hast performed Thy promise, Thou mighty God; and oh, we bless Thee, Thou kind Restorer of our joy. Uplift thy voice to Him in thankfulness, oh Zion, the redeemed; array thyself in the garments of praise for Him; and do ye, oh, ye waste places of our Jerusalem, now restored to beauty, break forth into joy, and sing together; for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed the chosen of His love.

About a year ago was commenced the building of the house, in the main audience-room of which we assemble, for the first time, to-day. The work of uprearing the edifice has been diligently prosecuted; and now the part in which we are to worship for the future is almost com-

pleted. The work has been carried on amid the prayers and longings of anxious souls. Joyful was the day when we entered the Lecture Room below : still more joyful is the day when we hold our first religious exercises in this extensive hall. I cast a glance over these thick-clustering pews, along these stately walls, up to the massive timbers of this open roof, and far away to the dim recess of yonder tower ; and, as I look, I am conscious of strange feelings collecting round my heart. A sense of tenderness, a sense of awe, a sense of lively gratitude, are poured out in intermingling currents within my raptured soul. Feel you not the same ; and do not your bosoms thrill with unwonted sensations of thankfulness and praise ? Bow before the Lord in grateful adoration. His Spirit is with us now, I hope ; hovering above on dewy wing, and shedding down a blessing which shall consecrate this house to God forever. Yes, Father of all our happiness, we would dedicate to Thee this holy temple ; would make it a dwelling-place for Thee—a spot of hallowed memories, where, through all life's gloom, there may repose, in undimmed brightness, living beams of day-spring from on High.

'Tis true the God whom we worship does not

dwell alone in temples made by the hands of men. He is a Spirit, whose life-sustaining presence fills all earth, and ocean, and air, and the depths of ether unexplored. All places, all times, have been sanctified to Him by Jesus Christ. We may seek Him amid the deep silence of the vine-clad grove; we may seek Him beside the rippling brook, on the mountain-top, and in the forest shade. Ofttimes, indeed, it seems more meet to call upon the Lord in Nature's arching temple; as when the soul longs for some solitude in which to roam in unobserved communion with her God. But public worship has peculiar charms; and the place in which man is wont to join with others in prayer and praise to Jehovah, has attached to it a sacredness which none but him who has felt it can fully know. True, any spot may be hallowed by prayer and holy meditation. Even rocks and caves, frequented by the pious, may acquire the charm of sacredness:

“ Yet must the thoughtful soul of man invest
With dearer consecration those pure fanes
Which, severed from all sound of earth's unrest,
Hear naught but suppliant or adoring strains
Rise Heaven-ward. Ne'er may rock or cave possess
Their claims on human hearts to solemn tenderness.”

This on which our temple is being reared, is to

me a hallowed spot. I feel that God will make our house His dwelling-place; that He will display within these walls the wonders of His grace. He has already visited His people here; and He has shown His power over the heart and conscience of those who knew Him not, but now rejoice in Him "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The room in which we lately worshipped—and whence there yet shall often rise the voice of prayer—has been filled, from Sunday to Sunday, and from Wednesday evening to Wednesday evening, with the soul-refreshing presence of Jehovah. The Spirit has visited us in gracious outpourings from on high. The windows of Heaven have been opened upon us; and the dews of God's blessing have been distilled on our chastened hearts. Many a sweet moment have we spent in the cheerful room below: it has become to us a spot of sacred memories. Some of us entered there into a new and holier covenant with God, and were revived in Christian peace and joy. Some, while meeting these, returned from our long and lonely wanderings to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. Some first learned to love the Saviour there; felt there the first kindlings of responsive affection to God;

and there, in the presence of weeping friends, gave ourselves away, before the congregation, to Him who has redeemed us by His blood. To each of us it is a sacred place; we look upon it with feelings of deepest interest, and think it holy ground.

We love the quiet room below, and we love this spacious hall above. We were glad when they said unto us, "Let us go into the House of the Lord." We have come with crowns of thanksgiving on our heads, and singing in our hearts melodious songs of joy. Peace be within thy walls, Temple of the living God. May the saints of the Lord be gathered in ever-increasing numbers into thy courts of thanksgiving and holiness; may the people flock to thee as doves to their windows, and as eagles to their home in the mountains. For my brethren's sake, for my companions' sake, for the sake of all who shall come to thee to worship Jehovah, I say again, "Peace be within thee, Temple of the Most High God: may thy walls be called 'Salvation,' and thy gates, 'Praise.'"

Brethren, rejoice to-day before the Lord your God. Forget, for a moment, the sorrows of the Past; and give yourselves to rapturous gladness.

Oh, thou throbbing heart of mine, beat thou now with quickening pulse: "I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God;" for I feel my soul attuned this morning to melody divine. The glory of Lebanon has come upon Thy temple, O Jehovah, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of Thy Sanctuary: make Thou the habitation of Thy feet all glorious with splendor; make Thou this house of Thine "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations."

Once afflicted, brethren, ye are now restored to happiness and peace. Once deserted of God, ye are now become the "Zion of the Holy One of Israel." Ye are rescued and saved. Be true to your Redeemer, and all will be well: violence shall no more be heard in your land, wasting nor destruction within your borders: darkness shall never come again upon you; for the Lord shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

Praise Jehovah in the silence of your hearts, in this His holy temple. May you meet often in the sanctuary of your God, and commune here for many coming years with Him whom you adore. May these walls long stand as the monument of your love and patience—stand for years

after this tongue of mine lies silent in the grave, and after all the forms that sit before me now shall have crumbled into dust. *We* shall die; *we* shall go hence, and be no more. Soon, our friends shall lay our lifeless bodies in the tomb; and there, in solemn stillness, shall they molder away. But this Temple still shall stand, though growing gray with age; and its tower, pointing up to Heaven, shall discourse to others, with silent eloquence, of life eternal and immortal joys. The clear-toned bell, hanging in yonder tower, which so oft has summoned us to worship, shall still ring on; but its notes of sweetness shall fall on other ears, and speak to other hearts, than ours. Uplift thy tower yet for many, many years, Temple of our Heavenly King; and when our voices shall be heard no more within thy walls, may generations yet unborn worship unmolested here the God of their Salvation.*

When we look around upon this edifice, gaze upon its goodly proportions, and realize that this is all our own, we that know of the former desolation of Zion, feel that the Lord has indeed done "great things" in our behalf. But He has done far more than give us a temple. He has poured

* See Appendix, Note G.

out upon us the richest blessings in overflowing abundance. He has established us in peace and harmony; He has enlivened our piety; He has augmented our numbers, in the church, in the Sunday-school, and in the congregation. When we entered the room below, I felt that God would grant us His favor. Filled with the Spirit of Prophecy, I told you then that I thought a day had dawned on our Zion, the brightness of which would go on increasing in brilliancy; that the well-spring of our new-found happiness would gush forth in streams which would continue to refresh and make glad the city of our God. Did not I make a true prediction? Jehovah has visited His people. The time of His indignation seems to be overpast; and the time of refreshing has come: "The Lord *hath* done great things for us; whereof we are glad."

Peace and harmony have reigned from the first among the members of this church. The fellowship of kindred minds has found its place in our assemblies, and brotherly love, warm and impulsive, has throbbled in every breast. Bitterness and disputings have been unknown. Face has looked on face in mild benevolence; and heart has answered back to heart. Oh, it has

filled my soul with emotions too deep for utterance, when I have seen, as I have often done, hand press hand with the tightening grasp of tenderness, and eye overflow to eye with tears. Oh, thou God of Love, cause the streams of this affection to well up, as long as life shall last, in the bosom of every one of us; and may they flow on in ever-growing volume, and with warmer, holier, gushings, from out the open fountain of our soul.

Your affection, brethren, has not been unnoticed; it has not been without its power over the hearts of others. Some, now present, have had their feelings wrought upon; and, seeing in you the proof that the religion of Jesus is a living, earnest reality, have been led to give themselves away to Christ. There are those among you who had wandered far away from their Saviour—a Saviour confessed by them in earlier days. They had lost their first love; the attractions of the world had insensibly stolen away their affection, and earthly cares engrossed the time they should have spent in thoughts of Heaven. But they have returned to Christ. Departed joys have come back to them from out the distant past; and they feel to-day that God is very merciful,

that Jesus is very compassionate, plenteous in kindness and in pardon. Returning wanderer, I know thy heart is filled with gladness now; I know that a thrill of sacred pleasure pervades thy joyous breast, and gives thee calm content and peace. The image of Jesus is enshrined within thy soul again; and thou art certain now that thou wilt never forget Him more. He is the chosen Friend of thy life; and He is the comforter whom thou wishest near thee at thy death. Methinks I hear thee speak to Him, and promise never-fading recollection.

“Remember Thee! Remember Thee!
While flows this purple tide,
I'll keep Thy precepts in my heart,
Thy pattern for my guide:
And when life's weary journey ends,
And light forsakes my eye—
Be near me at my bed of pain,
And teach me how to die.”

There are those here to-day who can say with peculiar emphasis, “The Lord hath done great things for *us*; whereof we are glad.” They have found the Saviour precious to their souls; they have received in Him the pardon of their sins. Time was—and that not long ago—when Jesus possessed no attractions for them; when He

was without beauty, or comeliness, and found no favor in their eyes. Now, He seems arrayed in loveliness, and altogether worthy of man's highest, deepest adoration. Christ has been formed in them the hope of glory; they have confessed Him openly; put Him on in baptism; and have been numbered with the people of the Lord. I see their happy faces now; I see their silent look of joy, more eloquent far than words. I can read the thoughts that float in quietness across the mirror of their minds. There is gladness in their hearts; and their eyes are all a-glow with heavenly animation. They have received the promise of life eternal; and they are happy in their Saviour.

Yes, heaven-renewed soul, thy God "*hath* done great things" for thee. Rescued from sin's most cruel thralldom, thou hast found the freedom of a new-born creature: another hope, another life is thine. Corrected by the filial rod of Him that chastens because He loves thee, thou didst send upward deep-drawn sighs to Heaven; didst pass from sighs to vows, from vows to bended knees, from bended knees to earnest penitence and faith. Then, when with full heart thou didst give thyself away to Jesus, body and soul for-

ever, assurance cast out doubt, hope banished fear, and grief gave place to joy. Then thou didst find a glad Father; God, a happy child. Then didst thou live indeed, entranced with sacred raptures—an ark of peace, a shrine of grace celestial, an emerald throne of ever-radiant glory. Then thou didst bask beneath the golden sunshine of God's bright beaming mercy, and didst bathe thee in the silver stream of His eternal love. Then thy glad heart poured forth sweet murmurings amid its gushing happiness.

“In Thee, dear Lord, my pensive soul respire;
Thou art the fullness of my choice desires;
Thou art that sacred spring, whose waters burst
In streams to him that seeks with holy thirst.
Thrice happy man, thrice happy thirst, to bring
Thy fainting soul to so, so sweet a spring;
Thrice happy he whose well-resolvéd breast
Expects no other aid, no other rest.”

And for thee, too, oh thou still impenitent sinner, has God done “great things” within the last few months. But thou art *not* “glad thereof;” hast shown to Him no gratitude. Thou hast met with the people of the Lord in this His holy tabernacle; and thou hast felt here the movings of the Spirit, urging thee to repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou

hast almost resolved to give thyself without reserve to the Saviour. Perhaps thou didst make up thy mind to begin a new life of holiness, and didst commence the work of reformation. But, in the face of all this, thou art still unconverted to Christ, still unreconciled to God. The enmity of thy heart is not yet subdued; thou hast not in all sincerity, and in all honesty, given thyself to the Redeemer.

Oh, why is this? Why wilt thou run such fearful risks of being lost forever? Why wilt thou still, "after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?" So long as thou art impenitent—so long as thou wilt not heartily confess thy sin, and forsake it—thou art condemned to suffer the eternal vengeance of Heaven's Almighty King. If thou believest not in Jesus, thou art condemned to everlasting death; and every moment in which thou continuest in thy iniquity, thou art heaping up to thyself treasures of wrath against the day of wrath. The load of thy guilt is accumulating with fearful rapidity—burden being added to burden, and weight heaped upon weight. Thou mayest be gathering wealth, but

thou art treasuring up wrath ; thou mayest be acquiring fame, but thou art treasuring up wrath ; thou mayest be gaining worldly friends, but thou art treasuring up wrath ; thou mayest be enjoying earthly pleasures—flittering away thy life in folly—but thou art treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Every Sunday passed in dissipation adds to the heap of wrath ; every neglected sermon, every unheeded friendly admonition from God's faithful minister, every disregarded warning from Providence, every slighted call from the Spirit of grace and mercy, adds fearfully to the ever-growing heap of God's avenging wrath. Every day the weight of thy sins is becoming heavier ; every day thy load of guilt receives a fresh addition, to sink thee down the deeper, in the dark, dark, ocean of eternal woe.

Think not, think not, impenitent man, thou canst escape thy doom. Flatter not thyself with the thought that there is no punishment—or, if any, not eternal—in the world to come. If God will not destroy the wicked, why has He said that He *will* ? If there be no future punishment, why has God said that there *is* ? Wouldst thou, oh impious, convict thy God of falsehood ? If there be no eternal retribution, then the Bible is a

fiction, Jesus was an impostor, and the Apostles were either hypocrites or strangely self-deceived.

Thine own conscience tells thee that God will punish him that dies in his iniquity. Recollect the flutter of thy heart when illness has come upon thee. Remember that midnight voice, that doleful note of warning, coming, specter-like, from out the spirit-land. Call to mind the conviction that forced itself upon thee when thou didst so lately bend over the cold, pale corpse of one that was dear to thee, and kissed the marble lips with inward tremblings and deep, deep agony of soul. Remember the emotions wakened in thee by the echo of the funeral knell, by the gloomy pall, the mournful bier; and remember how, as the shrouded corpse was borne along to its lonely tomb, thou didst feel that death is not the last of man—didst feel that the spirit will pass to a righteous judgment—yea, didst have dread thoughts of coming woe when thou didst call to mind the time

“ *Thine* eye should look its last on earth,
And on the golden light of day;
When the sun that will rise the morrow morn
Shall shine on thy lifeless clay;
When the men above thee still will act
The drama of life and death,

And thou be sleeping a dreamless sleep
In the damp, cold, ground beneath."

The pale monarch of the world of shades seemed to stand before thee, with ghastly form, and fleshless cheek, and sunken eye, and withered skeleton-hand. Then didst thou quiver and tremble. Thy soul felt sad, and desolate, and woe-begone; and

"Fear crept to thy breast, through every pore,
As blood to a heart that will beat no more."

Die not, oh! die not, unbelieving man, in thine impenitence: die not so, or thou art lost forever. I tell thee the truth, if the Bible be true. Disbelieve me, and refuse to obey my words, at the peril of thy soul. I have warned thee faithfully. I am ready to answer, when God shall ask me, "Where is thy brother?" My hands and my conscience, I call myself to witness, are free from thy blood. The doctrine of the Gospel is fixed and positive; teaching that every unbeliever is already condemned to everlasting death, that only he that repents and turns in faith to Christ, shall see eternal life. This is the Gospel of Jesus; this is the Gospel of the holy Apostles; this is my Gospel—the Gospel which I

shall ever proclaim from this pulpit to you ; than which, I say with Paul, if any man, or even an angel from Heaven, preach another, let him be anathema—accursed of Heaven, accursed of Earth, forever.

Yes, my unconverted friends, God has “ done great things ” for you ; but you are not “ glad thereof : ” you answer the love of Jehovah with base ingratitude. Stubborn, unyielding souls, how can I move you to-day ; how persuade you to come to Christ and live ? Week after week have I preached to some of you the Gospel of Jesus. I have hurled against you, but with aching heart, the fearful threats and warnings of Jehovah ; I have portrayed with soul-yearnings of deep affection the love of Christ—laying bare to you, as once I did not think I ever could, the secret thoughts and workings of my heart : I have admonished, I have entreated, I have implored you, to flee to Jesus for refuge from the wrath to come, to seek from Him eternal life. Some of you have been moved to tears, have been made to feel your danger, and have been almost persuaded to yield your hearts to Christ. But you have gone away from the house of God, and, mingling with the world, have forgotten

your half-formed resolutions of amendment. Shall this be always so? Will you go on thus—now sinning, now repenting, now sinning again, and now again repenting—till God's patience is utterly exhausted; till He shall slay you suddenly, or wrap you, even before your life is ended, in the pall of everlasting gloom? Oh, I much fear me, this *will* be so with some that hear me now. Is my Gospel hidden from you? Do you not understand it? Then woe unto you, woe; for the Gospel is hid only from them that are lost—from them that are hurrying on in blindness down the road that leads to endless woe. God forbid that the Gospel should be already hidden from any of you. I can not, I will not, believe it. Jehovah's mercy is not yet wholly departed; He has not yet cast you off forever. But He may; *but He may*. Haste, then, haste, and make your peace with Heaven, while yet a pardoning God is found. The day of forgiveness is passing away. Soon will come the night of death, and brood over you forever with its sable wings of darkness. Then, it will be too late to seek the Lord; for there is no wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device, nor repentance, nor faith, nor hope, in the grave.

Why have you come hither to-day, my friends? Why do you assemble here from Sunday to Sunday? Right glad am I to see you; and from my soul I welcome you, for this and for all coming days of worship, to the Sanctuary of our God. May this house prove to each of you the very gate of Paradise; and here may Heaven shed its choicest perfumes on your waiting souls. But, oh, my heart misgives me for some among you. I fear me that there are those here who have come to-day, and have come before, to enjoy an hour of merely mental pleasure. Is it not so? I appeal to your conscience: *Is it not so?*—and can you do this, when I am proclaiming to you a message of life and death? Can you sit there so quietly, so unmoved, and desire to have only your imagination delighted, while I am striving, as for very life, to rouse your consciences, and work upon your hearts?

Oh, God, forgive this people. How long shall my words be unto them as “a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument;” heard with attention, heard with feeling, heard with pleasure; but, alas! forgotten as soon as spoken; drowned in the bustle and confusion of the world, lost amid

its tumults, like echoes quelled to silence amid the din of roaring waves.

God is my witness, I do not preach—and may I never preach—to please your fancy: I preach if, haply, I may save your souls. This is my aim, this is the height of my ambition. Oh, I would have each of you to shine in Heaven as a star in the crown of my rejoicing. Never, *never*, Jehovah helping me, shall I forget that, when I go into this pulpit, I go to preach Jesus of Nazareth—Jesus crucified for you, for me. Him I proclaim to you to-day: Him shall I ever proclaim from this sacred desk, the Spirit aiding my infirmities.

“In the cross of Christ of glory,
 Towering o'er the wrecks of Time:
 All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime.”

Oh, God, help me to speak faithfully to this people, to preach to them in all plainness the Gospel of Salvation, ; and may they each, oh Father, turn in penitence to Christ, and learn from Him to sing

“Of Thee with joy that hath a living spring
 In a full heart of music.”

TO

Mrs. Laura Pattison,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 23, 1855,

WHO WON THE HEARTS OF ALL BY HER EVER-READY ZEAL IN THE
CAUSE OF CHRIST; AND WHOM, NOW REMOVED TO ANOTHER
CITY, THE CHURCH STILL REMEMBERS WITH WARM
AFFECTION, TEMPERED BY DEEP REGRET
FOR HER UNTIMELY LOSS.

DISCOURSE XI.

THE CHRISTIAN'S "ALL IN ALL."

"Looking unto Jesus."—HEB., xii. 2.

THE Apostle Paul, one of the wisest and purest men that ever lived, "counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus was to him, as He is to every true-hearted Christian, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Christ is still, as He was of old, the Author and Finisher of the believer's faith and hope. He is our Saviour from sin and from its punishment. He is our Pattern, our Leader, our Guide. He is our comfort in sorrow and solace in affliction. He is our victory amid all conflicts with the temptations and allurements of the world. He is our joy amid distress, our hope amid discouragements, our shield from dangers, our refuge from life's stormy trials, our heavenly inheritance, our

"exceeding great reward." In a word, He is our "bright and morning Star"—illuminating the darkness of our minds, and chasing away with beams of celestial brightness the clouds of doubt and fear from off our souls. He is our heavenly magnet—the point round which cluster all our warm affections, the center toward which our hopes and aspirations keep ever tending beneath the drawings of attraction most blissful and divine.

Jesus has been revealed to us as the Author of Salvation. In Him there is fullness of pardon, and there is plenteous redemption. He delivers from sin, He purifies the heart, He prepares for the possession and enjoyment of Heaven. His love and grace are infinite; and He invites all, every where, to seek from Him eternal life. But he that would receive the rich treasures of the Saviour's grace, must believe in His power to confer it, and must submit with cheerfulness, and without a single reservation, to His direction and authority. He must look to Jesus as an all-sufficient Redeemer, as a perfect and infallible Teacher, as an exalted and all-powerful Mediator and Intercessor at the throne of Jehovah. He must "live by the faith of the Son of God:" he

must look ever away from earth to Heaven, and must keep his eye immovably fixed upon the ascended and glorified Redeemer. Sin, self, and the world must be crucified or forgotten; and the whole soul must be uplifted to Him who, through suffering and obedience unto death, became the Forerunner and Author of the Christian's faith. "Look unto Jesus" must be his motto; and Christ must be always kept enshrined within his heart "the hope of glory." Full redemption, and Heaven's eternal felicity, can be secured to him only on condition that he live a life of faith in the Son of God, and bring all the powers of his being into subjection to this Heaven-descended principle of love, and obedience, and hope, "Looking unto Jesus."

Jesus of Nazareth is worthy to be the object of our constant regard; for He is our life, our joy, our "all in all." The Scriptures are full of Christ. He is the end of the Law—the substance of its predictions, its promises, its types, its figures, and its ordinances; and He is the central-point, the very soul, of the Gospel. True, He is not revealed in all distinctness, but rather in dim foreshadowings, in the Old Testament; but still He is there, though partially hidden by

the obscuring veil of types and shadows; and through Him, as there described, is sketched forth in its grand outlines the righteousness which is by faith in God's eternal promise through His dearly beloved Son. Abraham saw the Saviour with a prophet's eye, and was rejoiced. Moses beheld Him with faith's pure vision, and was made exceeding glad. David and the prophets caught a glimpse-seraphic of His wonderful splendor, or goodness and beauty; and, beholding, "testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

But Jesus is revealed in the fullness of His perfection, in all His excellence, and power, and love, only in the New Testament—the new Covenant made with man by the everlasting Father, and sealed with the precious blood of His only-begotten Son. Here is made known the wondrous nature, and the resplendent glory, of the plan of Redemption—God in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to sinners their guilt, but forgiving them, all undeserving though they be, fully and freely in the Beloved. Christ is the sum and substance of the Gospel, its Alpha and Omega, its beginning and end. He is its subject; and He is, by His Spirit, its divine,

unerring, Author. In it He is revealed as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; Christ Crucified—foolishness to them that perish, but to them that are saved, Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

No wonder that we are bidden to keep our eye ever fixed upon the Saviour: no wonder that we are exhorted, as Christians, and as souls destined to live forever, to "Look unto Jesus." Let us consider Him at all times, amid our life's vicissitudes, and make Him evermore the fixed and changeless magnet of our hearts. Yes, Lamb of God, my soul would ever look to Thee. I would remember Thee as the sin-atonement sacrifice that took my guilt away; I would remember Thee as the day-star which dawned upon my darkness; I would remember Thee as Him who spoke the words of peace and pardon to my grief-stricken heart; I would keep Thee ever in my mind, as my Comforter, my Guide, my Hope, my Joy, my Heritage eternal.

Oh, ye that love the Lord, that have felt the rapture of forgiveness, uplift your thoughts, to-night, to Jesus. Oh, ye that do not yet believe, look unto Jesus now. Look upon Him, in His divine nature, your redeeming Brother, your

dearest friend—God and man united, your full Redemption, your almighty Saviour. Look upon Jesus in His life of perfect innocence and spotless purity—outcast for you, hated for you, reviled, buffeted, scourged, for you; fulfilling all righteousness in deed and thought that you, believing, might be clothed with His stainless robe of holiness, and find in Him salvation. Look upon the Saviour on the cross, dying for you amid the taunts and jeers of an unfeeling mob that thirsted for His blood. Look upon Him rising from the grave, ascending into Heaven, and sitting down at the right hand of God as your gracious Intercessor, and the Giver of every blessing earthly and celestial. Look upon Him there, enthroned in glory, and distributing gifts unto men. Infinite in wisdom, He knows your every wish, your every want: infinite in love, He feels your every grief and sorrow: infinite in power, He will supply, support, and strengthen, under all. The riches of His grace are more than sufficient to satisfy every needy soul, to comfort every mourning spirit, to dry the tear-drop from every weeping eye. He abounds in mercy, and in power. He is the ornament of your virtues, the well-spring of your comforts,

the stay and support of your weary minds, the cordial of your fainting hearts. Look to Him now, each of you, in faith and love. Make Him yours forever. Live henceforth upon His fullness day by day, that you may receive from that wondrous fullness grace and grace.

There is every thing in the character of Jesus to make Him lovely and desirable. All created beings have their imperfections; but the Son of God has neither fault nor blemish. The material sun which shines so brightly from mid-heaven, has spots upon its surface; but the Sun of Righteousness beams ever with pure and cloudless ray, shining "star-sweet on a gloom profound." Jesus is full of attraction. He is the incarnation of love divine, and of all the excellence and glory of Heaven. To him who admires high birth, I would say that Jesus is God's first-born, His only-born; and has been made by the Father "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." If any hold wisdom in their estimation, let them look to Jesus, and they will find that "in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." If any man think much of wealth, let him know that Jesus is the owner of the world, the heir of the Universe. Is holiness to be admired? Jesus is the Holy One

of Israel, the immaculate Son of the Most High, the great fount and source of purity and perfection. Are faithfulness and truth to be considered virtues? He is the faithful and true Witness—unswerving in the performance of His promises, as firm to His word as the deep-bedded rock of everlasting ages. Is love to be coveted? The love of Jesus is inexpressible; it far surpasses all human, all angelic knowledge. Is gentle kindness to be desired? He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Is beauty a joy? Jesus is fairer than the children of men. He is the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

Such a Saviour demands our admiration and our worship. Well may we ever look up to Him in confidence, in trustfulness, in joy. He is worthy of our adoration; He is worthy of our whole affection, and the unceasing service of our lives. Slain to redeem us to God by His blood, and exalted on high as the Head of the Church, the dispenser of all earthly and spiritual good, He is worthy to receive from us, and from the whole creation, an ever-vocal ascription of praise, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Let us ad-

mire Him then ; let us adore Him ; let us rear up for Him a throne within our hearts ; let us give Him supreme control over our affections ; let us dedicate ourselves to Him, soul and body, forever.

Believer in Christ, this is a blessed privilege which you enjoy, that you can always be "looking unto Jesus." As you gaze in thought upon the Saviour, and call to mind the atonement which He has made, you feel within a sacred sense of quietude and repose ; for you remember that "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Fear, which once tormented, has now been banished ; and Hope, seated on her vacant throne, points ever upward to the sky. The earth, for you, has lost its former charms, is stripped of its attractions. The world, with all its affections and lusts, has been renounced ; and all your love gathers now around the cross of Christ. Looking away from earth, with the eye uplifted in adoration to Jesus, you feel alike indifferent to the worldling's smiles, or the worldling's frowns ; and, as with faith's clear vision you see the glories and the wondrous splendor of Paradise, you lose sight forever of the glittering pageants of earth, its

shifting scenes of vanity, its delusive pleasures, its unsatisfying joys. Eternity is all unveiled before you; and, gazing on its lovely prospects with sweet anticipations of coming blessedness amid the heart-thrilling happiness of Heaven, you "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

There is no condition in life which may not be made happy to him who looks unto Jesus. There is no tendency to sin which may not be controlled by him who keeps his eye fixed in faith and love upon the Saviour; no temptation which may not be overcome; no fear which may not be banished; no sorrow which may not be lightened, and even turned to joy. The unfailing prescription for all earth's ills, is, "Look to Jesus."

Believing Christian, do you feel yourself still prone to sin, and do you wish to be completely purified? Look to Jesus. Consider what He suffered to cleanse you from iniquity; call to mind the thousand favors which He grants you; strive to realize by increased faith, the depth, the vastness of His love; make Him, by unremitted contemplation, to grow as it were into your very being. Do this, and you will find that every day Satan has less power over you, that you are

constantly perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Do your appetites tempt you to inordinate gratification? Look to Jesus, the temperate, the pure, the holy, and learn from Him the lesson of self-restraint. Is your temper unsubdued, and do your passions threaten to ride in unhallowed anger? Look to Jesus, the mild, the inoffensive, the calm, the lovely. Learn from Him, who, when He was reviled, answered not again; who, when smitten, smote not in return; who, when scourged, cursed not; who, when nailed to the cross, and tormented, and mocked, looked in pity upon His abusers, and prayed to Heaven: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Whatever be thy condition, whatever thou dost need, look, oh Christian, to thy Saviour. Has sickness come upon thee? Look to Jesus. He will sanctify thine affliction. Thou wilt learn, sooner or later—perhaps while thou art yet lying in pain upon the couch of illness, while thy frame is yet languishing almost to dissolution, while thy cheek is still pallid with the hue of death, and while the pulses of thy heart yet beat with faint and fluttering motion; even then, perhaps, thou wilt learn—that it was well for thy soul that God

laid His hand upon thee in heaviness, and, bringing disease upon thy fragile body, let thee down to the very verge of the grave. Look to Jesus in all such suffering, and it surely will be blessed to thy spiritual good. Thou wilt find then a holy season for meditation, a season of solemn self-examination, a sacred time of communion with thy Redeemer. Improve the visitation, and thou wilt soon break forth in thankfulness in the words of one who had felt the uses of affliction :

“Thou art like night, O sickness!
 Thou art like starry, spiritual Night!
 High and immortal thoughts attend thy way,
 And revelations which the common light
 Brings not, though wakening with its rosy ray
 All outward life. Be welcome, then, thy rod,
 Before whose touch my soul unfolds itself to God.”

Has care, has anxiety come upon thee? Look away from earth to Jesus. Has death torn away a friend from thy loving embrace? Thou hast a friend that never dies in Heaven. Art thou called upon to sever the sweet bonds of Christian affection; to leave those who have like hopes with thee of bliss eternal, and whose souls are knit in love to thine? Hast thou found that no tie on earth is permanent; that

“There is no union here of hearts
 That finds not here an end?”

Look to Jesus, who is present every where, who "is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Mourning soul, our soul throbs back with grief to thine. But, be thou comforted: Jesus reigns in Heaven. Uplift thy tearful eye to His, and He will answer with His cheering smile. When thou shalt behold no more the forms which thou hast seen so often bowed in prayer with thine, look thou still on Jesus, thy truest Friend, and cling closer than ever to His throne of mercy, and superabounding love. Look unto Jesus:

"When through the deep waters He calls thee to go,
The rivers of anguish shall not thee o'erflow;
For He will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

In all time of sorrow, in all time of tribulation, uplift thine eye, oh Christian, to the Saviour. Look Him steadfastly in the face; and learn that it is He who brings the trial, and He who enables thee to bear it with meek and quiet fortitude. Look to Him, also, amid enjoyment: and never forget that all thou hast is the fruit and purchase of His love. Look to Him in the hour of temptation, and cry aloud for help. He will show Himself the Captain of thy deliverance, and bring thee off a conqueror. Look to Him in earnest

prayer, whatever be thy need ; and He will hear the voice of thy complaint. Look to Him in life ; and, above all, look to Him in death. In that dread hour, look to Him with a feeling of entire dependence of soul, with desire burning and intense, with a firm-grounded confidence in the merits of His blood, with eager hope, and joyful expectation. Oh, then, in that trying hour, when thy flesh and thy courage may fail thee, when the heart-strings are parting and breaking, and thy soul is struggling to be free, look thou unto Jesus, with the eye of holy trustfulness and faith. He will support thee, and be the strength of thy heart, and thy portion forevermore.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
He will not, He will not, desert to His foes :
That soul, though all Hell should endeavor to shake,
He'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

Are there any in this assembly who are not habitually "looking unto Jesus?" I fear me there are. Are there not some here to-night, who are "without Christ," living "without God and without hope in the world?" I fear me there are. Ask yourselves, each of you, "What do I think of Jesus of Nazareth?" Hast thou received Him as thy Sacrifice, thy Saviour, thy Teacher,

thy God? Is He the Rock to which thou hast fled for refuge, the fountain in which thou hast washed, thy hope of everlasting life? Looking unto Him, hast thou found pardon of sin, and peace of conscience? Dost thou repose on Him amid life's trials, its conflicts, its fears? and wilt thou make Him thy rod and thy staff, when about to descend into the dark valley of the shadow of Death?

How wilt thou answer all these questions? If the Saviour is not yet thine, make Him thine, to-night. Turn away thine eyes from beholding vanity, and look unto Jesus. The Son of God has been lifted up upon the unhallowed cross. Gaze upon His agony, all endured for thee; gaze, until thy soul is melted into gratitude and love. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He was crucified for thee. The wounds which He received on Calvary are now pleading with mute eloquence for thy pardon, and are deeply moving the Father's affectionate heart:

" 'Forgive him, oh, forgive!' they cry,
 'Nor let that ransomed sinner die!'"

Let the love of Christ constrain thee, and bring thee in penitence to the feet of the Saviour. I will tell thee nothing, now, of the terrors which

an insulted Redeemer shall lanch forth on the dreadful day of judgment—that awful day of retribution—when “every eye shall see Him,” and millions shall wail because of His avenging presence. I will speak to thee only of the love—the overflowing love—of Jesus. He entreats thee now, “Give, oh, give to Me thy heart.” Yield thee; why delay? Be thou reconciled to God. Thou knowest that thou art sinful, that Christ is the only Saviour from iniquity. Look unto Jesus, then, and thou shalt live. Cast thyself unreservedly into His open arms. He is ready to receive thee: He is able, “He is willing: doubt no more.” Fall at His feet, confess thy guilt, and seek for pardon and eternal life. He will not, He can not, refuse thy prayer. Rest, full of hope, on His eternal love and mercy. Fear not: only believe. Christ Himself will aid thee to put thy trust in Him:

“His help he'll freely give;
He makes no hard condition;
'Tis only, 'Look, and live.'”

Look, then, in faith, unto Jesus, and thou shalt dwell with him above:

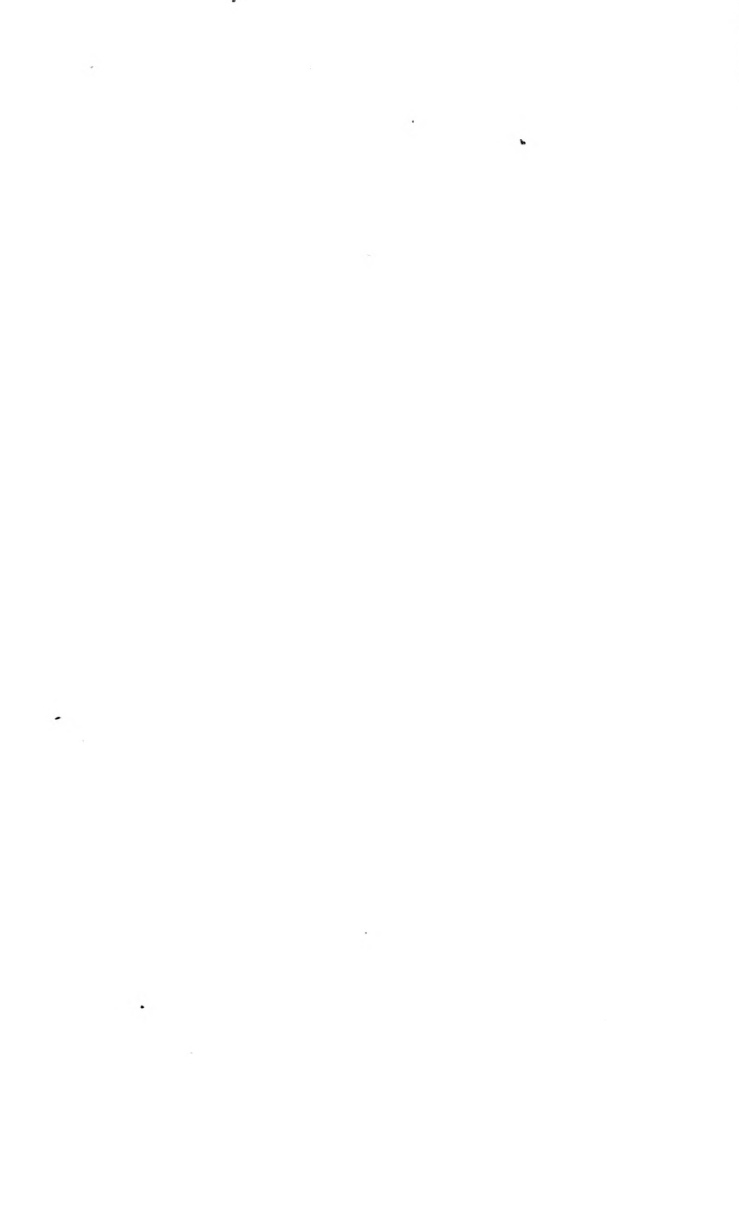
“Believe, and take the promised rest;
Obey, and be forever blest.”

TO

Mrs. C. R. Stone,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 6, 1855,

IN WHOSE BREAST A WARFARE HAD BEEN WAGED FOR LONG BETWEEN
DUTY AND FEELING; BUT WHO, AT LAST, THOUGH THE WIDOW OF
ONE WHO WAS A MINISTER OF EMINENCE IN ANOTHER COM-
MUNION, AND THOUGH HERSELF FOR YEARS A MEMBER
OF THE SAME, FOLLOWED, WITH WILLING HEART, THE
FOOTSTEPS OF HER LORD, AND FOUND THE
PEACE HER SPIRIT HAD DEVOUTLY
SOUGHT.



DISCOURSE XII.

THE SOUL-SUMMER'S CLOSE.

“The summer is ended.”—JER., viii. 20.

THE summer is the perfection of the year. Nature is then dressed out in all her loveliness and grace. The flowers send forth their sweetest perfume; the trees are laden with their choicest fruit; and the fields all glisten with the gleam of ripening grain. The earth, the air, the grove, the stream, are full of life and happiness. The grass is green upon the velvety mound; and the woods are decked in a robe of gorgeousness and beauty.

But autumn comes. The flowers cease to bloom, the grass withers, and the leaves of the forest are seen to fade and fall. The humming of happy insects is heard no more in the air; the song of harmony is stilled in the grove; the streams begin to rise and swell; and to the

green luxuriance of the forest succeeds "the sere and yellow leaf."

Ay, methinks I hear a moan issuing forth from out the dim and lonely woods; and, on the freshening breeze there is borne to my ear the mournful plaint, "The summer is gone." Yes, the bright and sunny days of the season of fruitfulness are fled; the parti-colored leaves and the blushing flowers are swiftly fading; and the sighing of the winds, and the groaning of the forest, and the loud sobbing of the storm-tossed waters, all tell us that autumn is here. The last lingering gleams of summer are dying away, and the warning twilight of the year is coming on. The summer has gone to her tomb in the silent land. There she lies among her pale sisters; and the winds of Time moan a sad requiem over that still and dreamless band.

God would teach us a lesson by the varying seasons. They come, they go; and are seen no more forever. So it is with human life, and human glory. The days of our years are few; and these few are full of trouble. Weariness, and anxiety, and disgust, are the lot of mortals while they live on earth:

“Behold, fond man ;
See here thy pictured life : pass some few years,
Thy flowering spring, thy summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene.”

So it is. As the verdure of the summer withers, as its flowers cease to bloom, so must our mortal body wither, and the damask of our cheek must fade away. Oh, it is too true what the voice of the Lord has uttered, “All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field.” The glory of man vanisheth as a mist in the morning ; his life fleeth away as a vapor, and is gone. His spirit is borne aloft, and is lost, like the setting sun, in the bosom of night.

Another fair summer has departed. A few evenings since, I heard her sigh forth her last farewell on the night-wind's chilly breath ; and the cold breeze sounded like a sorrowful dirge wailed over the dying and the dead. It tore its way in mournfulness along the gloomy streets ; bending the solitary trees to earth, and scattering their sapless branches, and fading leaves upon the stony pavement. Far out, beyond the suburbs of the city, the forest was groaning, and

the waves of the angry lake were hurled in foam against the close-confining shore. Oh, these were sounds of sadness to the heart; and mournful thoughts crept out, and took possession of my soul. A sigh broke forth from the silent bosom—a sigh, to think that the summer had fled forever.

Something whispered: “Wherefore sigh? Another season of summer will come, bringing joys like the joys of that which is past. The gardens will blossom again; the woods will be decked again in beauty, and amid the shady groves will be heard once more the voice of singing and of melody.”

“True,” methought; “another summer will come; but who can tell whether I, and those I love, shall live till then? Too well I remember those whom I saw not long since in health and happiness, but who now are sleeping in the grave. Little deemed they that the summer which is gone was to be their last—that, before it ended, they were to bid farewell to earth, and to close their eyes forever on all its scenes of loveliness and joy. Yes, another summer will come; but who among those to whom I minister the Word of Life, will look upon its dawning?”

The spirits of some who little dream of their fate, may then sleep too soundly to hear my voice. Cheeks now ruddy may then be pallid with the hue of death; and faces now pale may be paler still in the tomb. The sun of another summer may rise, and wake all Nature into life; but its rays will dart no gleam into the grave. Those that are there, will sleep their last, long, slumber—seeing no sight of the beauty which others behold above them, and hearing no sound of the gladness that stirs the hearts which soon will lie as still and cold as theirs. The turf may be green above them, the flowers may be fragrant, and invite the bee to come and gather thence its honey; Nature around may rejoice;

“‘The earth may be glad, but death and gloom
Will dwell with *them* in the silent tomb.’”

Such were my thoughts; and they filled my soul with sadness. None but a pastor can know how the heart of a spiritual shepherd who loves his flock yearns over those whom God has committed to his care. He is striving to train them for the skies, to draw away their minds from the enslaving witchery and enchantment of earth, and fix them in hope upon the glories and the

eternal enjoyments of Heaven. He sees Death striking down one after another, and arraiging soul after soul before the judgment-seat of Christ. He knows not who will be summoned next; he knows not how many will be called; he knows not who among them all will receive a crown of life, and who will find the gates of Heaven fast barred against him. He is alarmed. He sees that some to whom he ministers have no saving faith in Christ; and he is sure that they, if called, would die in hopelessness and despair. The angel of Death may summon some one of *them*; and then of what avail will be his warnings, his admonitions, his earnest beseechings, uttered Sunday after Sunday, and spoken in the ear of private friendship? Oh, they will only serve to sink the mourner the lower, and the deeper in the ocean of wretchedness and woe; and to rack his bosom with the stings of a more bitter anguish and remorse. He sees that some who have named the name of Jesus—who are professed followers of Christ—have not that faith in the Saviour which urges believers on to deeds of self-forgetfulness and love; that they do not exhibit that zeal which becomes the redeemed of the Lord; that their thoughts seem to be

more engaged with earth than Heaven ; and, oh, he fears for these, lest, if called to judgment, they should find themselves to have been self-deceived, to have indulged in a false hope ; never to have truly believed in Christ, and never to have received the pardon of their sins.

Thoughts such as these take possession of the faithful pastor's heart, when death is busy among his people ; and fill him with despondency. He fears that he may not have done his duty ; and he trembles lest the stain of blood may be found upon his soul. The burden of responsibility presses heavily upon him ; and he feels that he can scarcely bear its ponderous weight. Men are dying around him—some of whom he might, perhaps, have saved from everlasting ruin ; and yet they go down in despair to the grave. He himself is mortal, and may be called at any moment to give an account of his stewardship to God. Oh, then, he fears that he has not preached as if every sermon were his last. He sees a thousand tombs lying open before him ; he sees Death standing near, and Eternity looming up upon the sight. He feels that life is indeed only a hand-breadth ; that souls are too precious to be trifled with ; that opportunities are too few to be

lost ; that an hour is worth the wealth of an empire ; that all his power of pleading, all his earnestness, all his eloquence of persuasion, ought to have been brought into play, to save the souls that hear him from eternal death.

I stood, last Monday, beside the corpse of one who was a fellow-laborer in the ministry. You know to whom I refer.* It was only a week or two before, that I had been seated at his side in the pulpit, and had heard him discourse of the Saviour and of man's hope through Him, of everlasting Redemption. As we walked home together, we spoke of the difficulty of moving the impenitent to consideration, and of the discouragements of those who preach in our city the Gospel of Christ. We hoped that happier times were coming ; we hoped that God's Spirit would bless our ministers more richly in the future in the work to which they have devoted their time, their talents, their all.

We parted. We never met again. A week ago, I saw his body stretched stiff and stark in death. As I looked upon his coffin in the church, saw the mourners of his congregation weeping round, and heard the words of the solemn funeral obsequies, I felt that he who

* See Appendix, Note H.

preaches in our city must preach as a dying man to dying men; I felt that no earnestness in beseeching could be overwrought, that no tenderness could be too melting, that no warnings could be too alarming, for him to use who would urge those he loves to flee from the wrath to come. As I sat so silent in the pulpit, gazing down upon that clay-cold corpse, I thought of *you*, my brethren; I thought of *you*, my unconverted friends. Can you wonder that it was hard to keep back the rising tears? Can you wonder that my heart *would* throb with pain? Oh, I feared that I had not spoken to you with sufficient solemnity; I feared that I had not entreated as I ought; for where are those that, hearing me, have lately repented, and turned to Christ; where are those who, under my preaching, have recently resolved to seek a reconciliation with God, and to give themselves in love and gratitude to the Saviour? God forgive me if I have been unfaithful: God forgive you, if you have been perversely blind to duty, and madly refused to accept eternal life.

Thoughts crowded thick upon me, as I looked toward that shrouded form; and there was a sound ringing in my ear, as though the voice of

the dead had burst from the coffin, "My brother, speak thou fervently to those whom thou wouldst save from destruction; speak quickly; speak urgently, for there is no repentance in the grave." Oh, it was an hour of deep solemnity and awe. Old Time seemed to stand at the head of the pulpit, brandishing his flashing scythe, and saying, with a hoarse and hurried voice, "Work, while it is called to-day; for to-night I will mow *thee* down." Grim Death appeared to post himself at the side of the pulpit, fitting a sharp arrow to his bow, and saying, "Hurl *thou* God's darts, and *I* will shoot mine." The tomb seemed to open at the foot of the pulpit, just under the coffin; and there came thence a voice, which said in sharp and ringing accents,

"'Louden thy cry to God, to men,
And now fulfill thy trust:
Here *thou* must lie—mouth stopped, breath gone—
And silent in the dust.'"

Feeling as I do, and knowing what I do, ought I not to plead with you this morning, ought I not to implore you to escape from threatening ruin, and flee for refuge to the Saviour? Sickness has been busy among us, and it is busy now. Death has come and carried off some whom you

know right well. Their "summer is ended;" their harvest is passed; and God alone can tell whether their souls are saved. If they believed in Christ, they are happy with their Redeemer: if they did not believe on Jesus, the wrath of God, the Scripture says, abides upon them, and will abide forever. God knows the fate of each and all.

The summer is gone; and it will not return again. It was a season of temporal blessings, and of spiritual grace. It was a time granted us for repentance—a time in which the long-suffering of God was offering us salvation. Did we each improve it; or, did we waste its precious moments in thoughtlessness and folly? Ask your heart, each of you; and learn whether you have rightly used the hours of the summer that is gone. Remember that it was to you a season of Gospel grace, during which, while gloom surrounded others, the light shined upon your pathway, "to guide your feet into the way of peace." You had the Bible; you had religious instruction from the pulpit; you had liberty to worship God under your own vine and fig-tree; you lived, perhaps, among Christian friends, whose prayers and whose example gave you assistance

in raising your heart to God. How have these advantages been improved? Have they led you to the foot of the cross; or, is your soul, in spite of all, still alienated from Christ, and still a lover of the world? You had a mighty work to perform, in the subduing of sinful passions, in the cultivation of Christian graces; and it is a grievous thing, if you have let the summer pass with the work yet unaccomplished. I fear me, that God will not forgive you for your neglect, if He come and find you thus idle and slothful in His vineyard.

Another summer season of God's grace has departed. Happy are we if we have improved it as we ought. My Christian brother, if thou hast made use of the spiritual blessings of the summer to build thyself up in the most holy faith, to grow in knowledge and in piety, to increase in zeal, to get the mastery over thy sinful inclinations, to be fashioned more and more into the likeness of the Redeemer, thy labor has not been in vain in the Lord; thou hast made yet more secure thy title to the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Go on in thy course of holiness and piety; be not weary in well-doing, for in due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not.

But are there not some here who have suffered this summer season of spiritual blessings to pass away without improvement? Oh, I fear that there are some among us who were impenitent when the summer began, and who are impenitent now—still obdurate and unconverted, in the face of the warnings of Providence, in spite of the admonitions and persuasions of the Gospel, in spite of the entreaties and exhortations of the preacher, in spite of the rebukes and stings of conscience, and the earnest heart-drawings of the spirit of grace. If you can resist all that you have seen, and all that you have heard, and all that you have felt, this last summer, what hope is there that any power will ever hereafter be able to effect your conversion? You have had a favorable time for reflection and self-examination. Providence has been teaching you by numerous lessons that you must die; the pulpit has told you that there is happiness for the repentant, but that woe awaits him that will not believe in the Saviour; the Spirit has urged you with an energy never felt before; and yet you have not resigned yourself to God—you have not given your heart to Christ.

My brother, my soul laments over thee. What

hard-heartedness, what ingratitude, is this of thine? Neglecter of God's great salvation, pause and think. Whither art thou hastening so madly, so blindly, and with such frantic eagerness and speed? Stop and reflect. Call to mind thy privileges, and remember that, if thou perish in thy sins, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, in the day of judgment, than for thee. Thou hast long, and most sinfully, resisted the Spirit of God; thou art, it may be, resisting Him now. Oh, if angels weep, this is a spectacle over which they might shed a flood of tears, to see thee, a feeble worm of the dust, contending with thy Maker. Dost thou not hear that sound which comes so solemnly from the distance, and falls with hollow echo on the soul—"My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Thou wilt heed it not; thou wilt keep on resisting the moving of the Spirit of truth and grace? Oh, say not, think not, act not so. If thou wilt, thy condition must soon—if it is not now—be one of helplessness, and hopelessness, and dire despair. Every stifled conviction will but hasten thy ruin; the light of every Sunday will but guide thee on to denser gloom; every truth uttered in thine ear, every argument spoken

to thy reason, every appeal addressed to thy conscience, will but harden thee in iniquity, and draw around thee yet more closely the clanking fetters which shall bind thee forever in the pit of the lost. The crisis must come at last. God will shut the door of hope, and thou wilt hear Him say in sorrow : " Oh, that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace ; but now they are hid from thine eyes." The Spirit will take his sad departure, and leave upon thy soul the seal of condemnation. Nothing will be able to break it ; the die will then be cast ; the decision will be fixed and irreversible. The sentence will then be recorded against thee in Heaven, and God will say to men and to angels : " Let him alone : he is joined to his idols ; *let him alone.*" Then thou wilt be lost forever. Thou wilt not know it, perhaps, but it will all be true. Henceforth thy spiritual slumber will be as profound as the grave—undisturbed by any argument, or entreaty, or threatening ; unbroken by the ever-nearing realities of the world to come ; and, though others may be awakened, thou shalt still sleep on ; though refreshing showers from above may vivify and quicken many a heart around thee, thine shall be sterner than the hardest rock ; and never shall it

be softened—never, until the vengeful thunderbolt of Heaven shall smite and scatter it in fragments on the ground. Thou wilt see thy folly then, but it will be too late to seek a remedy. Hurléd without hope from time into eternity, thou wilt exclaim, in bitterness of spirit: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved.”

My friend, my brother, still let me plead with thee. Another summer season of spiritual opportunities has been suffered to pass away in neglect. Another autumn of privileges is begun. Use well the time which still is thine, and let not mercies abused, gracious seasons mis-spent, warnings disregarded, admonitions unheeded, entreaties slighted, kindly offers treated with scorn, rise up and condemn thee in the day of judgment. Now, once again, on the threshold of a new season of grace, I offer thee eternal life. Wilt thou refuse it, and in its stead choose death, and shame, and contempt, and lamentation, and woe? Turn not away from the garden of Paradise to wander in the wilderness of desolation and gloom. Who that reflects would prefer an eternity of clammy darkness to an eternity of ever-brightening light? What can shield thee from the storm of God's avenging wrath, when He cometh like

a whirlwind, and sweeps the earth as with the besom of destruction? Where wilt thou hide thee, where seek shelter, in the up-loomng day of judgment? Pleasure will then be turned to gall and wormwood; the glitter of the world will cease to bewilder and blind; the spell of its beauty will charm no more, and hushed will be the music of its siren songs. Oh, when that awful day shall burst upon the world with its flashing lightnings and its loud-roaring thunders, thou wilt feel that all thy long-loved joys are gone, and that "in one hour thou art made desolate." The pleasure-blossoms of earth have gone upward as dust, and disappeared, and its delights are all forgotten dreams. The freshness of youth has faded; the ties of kindred are broken; the gladness of companionship is felt and known no more; the greetings of friends and of neighbors have ceased; the voices of the loved ones at home are silent; and the old familiar songs and melodies of earth have died away. All is swallowed up in the day of the Lord's fierce anger and consuming wrath. The judgment seemed to linger long, *but it has come*. Thou didst hope, perhaps, that it would never arrive, *but it has come*. Oh, the day of God's fiery indignation has come, and its coming

is the final quenchment of all hope to thee. Thy "summer is ended," and thou art not saved.

Morn came, and called thee to repent. Thou didst heed her not; and so she sadly smiled, and waved thee an adieu. The season of thy youth is gone. Noon came, and called thee to repent. Thou didst turn thine eye away; and so fair Noon departed, weeping, from thy sight. The season of thy vigor has fled forever. But, perhaps, the Noon still lingers, and hesitates to leave thee to thy fate. She speaks; she says, "*Repent.*" Heed thou her monitory voice; else Night will come, and give thee a summons which thou must obey. Neglect the calls of Mercy in the present, and, should God even add a few more years to thine ungrateful life, it will be a time of failing strength to thee; and it may be a time of labor and sorrow—a time of thick darkness, in which the very light will be darkness. Methinks I see thee now—see thee in the day of thine utter desolation.

"Night tappeth gently at a casement gleaming
With the thin fire-light, flickering, faint, and low;
By which a gray-haired man is sadly dreaming
O'er pleasures gone—as all life's pleasures go.
Night calls him to her, and he leaves his door
Silent and dark—and he returns no more."

TO

Mrs. Elizabeth Moreira.

BAPTIZED SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 24, 1854,

WHO, FINDING THAT THERE IS JOY IN THE SERVICE OF JESUS, IS
ALWAYS PREPARED FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF
EVERY "GOOD WORD AND WORK;"

AND TO HER SISTER,

Miss Amanda Boyce,

BAPTIZED SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 21, 1854,

WHO WAS LED TO CONSECRATE HERSELF IN BAPTISM TO THE
SAVIOUR; THOUGH, IN SO DOING, SHE HAD TO SEVER
RELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS WHICH HAD BECOME
ENDEARED TO HER SOUL.

DISCOURSE XIII.

BROTHERLY UNION IN A CHURCH.

“Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”—2 COR., xiii. 11.

HARMONY was originally the law of the universe. Discord, however, has intruded itself; and marred the beauty and the order which once pervaded the world. Yet did it not wholly destroy the harmonious arrangements enstamped by God upon the creation; for, in the natural world at least, and in some respects in the moral, order still remains the rule, and discord the exception. Nature, in its external aspects, still conforms to the laws and regulations to which God subjected it at the time of its constitution; and yet performs, with unvarying certainty, its ceaseless evolutions. The sun shines now with the same brightness, and shoots forth the same quickening and enlivening rays as it did in the time of Adam. The moon yet gives out the same re-

flected light; and the stars beam with the same pale luster as in the days of yore. The showers of heaven still descend, to refresh and vivify the ground; and the glad earth shoots forth, beneath the influence of light, and heat, and moisture, the same luxuriant vegetation; and produces—yet not without man's labor—every kind of fruit and vegetable, with the same certainty and the same regularity, throughout in like abundance and in like perfection, as in the first and happiest days of our original progenitor.

Thus, throughout all external nature, harmony still prevails; and discord only now and then jars its well-tuned strings. But it is not so with nature in its moral aspect: *it is not so with man.* The rude hand of sin has swept across the chords of the heart of humanity, and thrown them all into disorder and inharmonious confusion. The connecting link between him and his God has been harshly broken; and the soul of the created has been disjoined from the soul of the Creator. The pulse of the one once beat in unison with the pulse of the other; but the blighting influence of the first transgression broke up this harmony, and severed man from the communion of his Maker. So was disorder introduced into the

moral world, and partly into the physical; and so was brought upon our race an interminable train of evils, from which we can never be wholly freed in this life, though they may be mollified, and their consequences in the world to come be averted, by the offering for sin which was made by the Saviour on Calvary.

Man, therefore, is at war with his God; and his corrupted passions are ever in a state of contention with the little remnant of goodness and purity in himself which has survived the destruction of the Fall. Therefore is he always prone to variance with his brother; and, in his selfishness, is inclined to disregard the calls of his neighbor upon his compassion, his assistance, his sympathy, and his love. The harmony which should prevail between him and his fellow-man has been interrupted by sin; just as that which once existed between him and his Maker has been destroyed, and changed into distraction and discord. To establish this harmony between man and man, and to restore it between man and God, was the aim of Him who died for our sake; and is the grand end and object of the Christian Religion. When the Gospel shall have accomplished this, it will have completely performed

the will of Him who is its Author; and man, freed from the curse of the Fall, and renewed in spirit, will rise in glory from his present degradation, and will become assimilated in nature, and in destiny, to the angels who surround the throne of the Eternal.

The religion of Christ is a religion of peace, and harmony, and love. Its advent on earth was heralded in a song chanted by "a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good-will toward men.'" Its Founder is called, by way of eminence, the "Prince of Peace;" and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit are promised to all who believe in its precepts, and conform their lives to its teachings.

"Be of one mind, live in peace," the Apostle says to the Church in Corinth, at the close of this his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, "and the God of love and peace shall be with you." And he had need to utter this exhortation; for the Church was distracted and divided into parties; which, in their zeal for their own opinions, had left the simplicity of the Gospel, and had departed from the trodden highway of duty; wandering into paths of their own

invention, and straying from the truth as it is in Jesus.

Paul himself had founded the Church in Corinth; and had labored in that city more than a year and a half, "teaching the Word of God" among its inhabitants. Many had believed, and turned unto the Lord. On his departure, Apollos, an eloquent and learned Jewish Christian of Alexandria, in Egypt, came to the same city; and, while Paul was preaching in Ephesus, in Asia Minor, prosecuted the work which that Apostle had begun among the people of Corinth. He was gladly received by the Christians of that corrupt city; and the authority of his teaching became so powerful that, after a time, some preferred him to Paul; and, if they did not create an open schism in the Church, formed a party in it which adhered to Apollos; and excited among the brethren an unhappy division and strife, as unbecoming to Christians as it was dangerous to the peace and harmony, and even to the existence of the religious community itself.

Some three years had now elapsed since the planting of a Church in this, the capital city of Achaia. Paul, meanwhile, had paid the brethren a visit; but the larger portion of his time had

been occupied in teaching in Ephesus the things which relate to the kingdom of God. While thus engaged, Apollos himself being then with him in Ephesus, the Apostle hears from some who were members of the household of Chloë, that there are "envying, and strife, and divisions," in the Church at Corinth; that one is saying, "I am of Paul;" another, "I am of Apollos;" another, "I am of Cephas," (that is, of Peter;) and another, "I am of Christ." This leads him to write his First Epistle to the Corinthians, in order that he may reclaim them from party-strife and contention; and bring them to a condition of harmony, which alone can consist with their happiness as individuals, and their prosperity as a community of Christians. His letter had also other ends in view:—to check the progress of immorality among believers in Corinth, a city world-noted for its licentiousness; to answer certain queries which had been addressed to him by the brethren, and thus correct various disorders which had begun to prevail in their church assemblies; and to defend the doctrine of resurrection from the dead, which some philosophizing brethren of the Church had called in question, and

thus subverted the very ground-work and basis of the Christian system.

This Epistle partly effected the object for which it was written; but it did not wholly succeed in healing the differences and disturbances which existed among the brethren. On the contrary, the anti-Pauline influence in the Church had increased; and those who were actuated by it, had sought in every way to overturn the authority of the Apostle, and to discredit his claims as a divinely-called ambassador of Christ. This led to the composition, probably in Macedonia, of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians: at a point of time not long posterior to the transmission of the First, but subsequently to the departure of Paul from Ephesus, on the occasion of the uproar excited by Demetrius the silversmith.

In this letter, the language of commendation and love, which is so natural to the Apostle, is mingled with that of censure, and even of threatening. The Church was still distracted by contentions and jealousies; and harmony appeared to have fled forever from among the Christians of Corinth. Paul seems almost to dread the discoveries which he anticipated he should make on his approaching visit; "for, I

fear," he says, "lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: (I fear) lest there be (found) debates (wranglings), envyings, wraths (angry feelings), strifes (party-contentions), backbitings (slanders), whisperings (secret personal detraction), swellings (a puffing up with pride and vanity), tumults (disorders created by party spirit); and, lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed." Such were the fears entertained by the Apostle. He had good reason, therefore, for writing sharply to the Christians of Corinth, and rebuking them, as he does, with severity—yet a severity tempered with love—for the evidences which they were giving of departure from the path of rectitude and virtue, and from the precepts of an all-holy and perfect Religion. Such disorders could not prevail in the Church without destroying the Christianity of its members, endangering its existence as an organized community, and nullifying its influence, as a religious missionary body, among and upon the

pleasure-loving and money-seeking inhabitants of the luxurious and rich commercial city of Corinth. He combats them, therefore, with all Christian zeal, and with his whole Apostolic authority; exhorting the brethren "to be of one mind;" and promising them, that then, *and only then*, "the God of love and peace" should be with them, and grant them His blessing; that then, *and only then*, He would vouchsafe to them the comforting assurances of His all-pervading, His unlimited, kindness and love.

"Behold," exclaimed the Psalmist, "how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" It is like the precious ointment that ran down upon the beard of Aaron: it is "as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion." Or, as the poet Montgomery paraphrases the passage:

"How beautiful the sight
Of brethren who agree
In friendship to unite
And bonds of charity!

'Tis like the precious ointment, shed
O'er all his robes, from Aaron's head.

"'Tis like the dews that fill
The cups of Hermon's flowers,
Or Zion's fruitful hill,
Bright with the drops of showers,

When mingling odors breathe around,
And glory rests on all the ground."

Brotherly love is a God-like affection: it is the distinguishing trait of the Christian; and is the foundation of all true Church-fellowship. "*Be of one mind,*" says the Apostle: think the same things; strive for the attainment of the same glorious objects; be united and knit together in the bonds of an affection which shall be like the affection of Jesus; "receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God;" and see each in the other a fellow-heir of immortality. This is the bond which is to unite the Church; to make it strong as one man; and to give it the victory in the grand contest which it is waging—but as yet how ineffectually—with the confined hosts of infidelity, superstition, idolatry, and false religion in a thousand forms. "Union is strength:" disunion is defeat and disaster. The Church of God is a union of kindred hearts and kindred minds—hearts all filled with the same affections, the same desires, the same hopes; and minds all engaged in the same pursuits, and intent on the accomplishment of the same grand end of existence—the salvation of themselves, and of the world, through

Jesus Christ, the exalted and matchless Son of God.

To "*be of one mind*" in the Gospel, is to entertain similar sentiments with regard to the leading precepts and doctrines of Christianity. It is not certain that Paul meant, in the passage before us, to convey this particular phase of meaning; but it is a sense which is fairly deducible from the form of the expression, and one which the Apostle brings forward elsewhere; as when, for example, he exhorts the Church at Philippi "*to walk,*" as far as it had received knowledge, "*by the same rule,*" and to "*mind the same thing.*"

We are not to suppose that entire conformity in every sentiment is enjoined, either here or elsewhere, in the writings of the Apostles, on believers in Christ; for this would be quite inconsistent with that freedom in the Lord which the early disciples enjoyed, and would be, in the very nature of things, a result quite impossible of accomplishment. Speculative differences of opinion on points not affecting the fundamentals of Christian belief, are altogether allowable, and must be conceded to all, if real harmony is to be expected in the Church of God. All minds can not be clothed in the same theological jacket, for

minds, like bodies, though formed alike in the main, are in many respects various in their constitution.

Such a uniformity in the sentiments of the brotherhood in a Church is not only not to be looked for, but it would, even if possible, be wholly undesirable. The highest union of the Christian body is attainable only by diversity; for, did all think alike—were the thoughts of each member cast in the same mold—there would be no life, no activity, no incentive to prolonged effort at acquiring increased knowledge and virtue. The Church would stagnate, and its waters, unruffled by a breeze, and devoid of all motion, would soon be dissipated in vapor, or be frozen into hopeless solidity. It would be like a dead body, possessing the form of a man, but destitute of the spirit which alone giveth life, and, consequently, it could never accomplish any thing noble or grand in society, but would fail most signally of attaining the end for which it was established. A unity of this kind would be a calamity instead of a blessing, for it would be a unity that would result in stagnation and death. The Church of Rome attempted, at one period of her history, to secure such a uniformity in sen-

timent among her members ; and, in order to do so, trampled beneath her feet, without remorse, “ the imprescriptible rights ” of humanity, and endeavored to enslave—what never can be enslaved among a people conscious of their high origin and exalted destiny—the human mind itself, and to chain it to the stake of the Inquisition. To some extent she succeeded ; but in the same proportion as she crushed the soul out of humanity, she drove the life-blood out of herself, and reduced her once blooming form to an emaciated and corpse-like existence, without animation, without hopes, without aims, and without aspirations. From such a unity as this may the Church of God be ever delivered. Even discord itself would be preferable to a unity so spirit-fettering, so soul-clogging as this.

Yet with all this freedom, the membership of a Church must “ be of one mind ” on the fundamental and essential doctrines of Christianity. There is “ *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,* ” we are told in the Epistle to the Ephesians ; and Timothy is enjoined to “ hold fast *the form of sound words* ” which he had received of the Apostle Paul, and to hold them in the “ faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. ” That there is a

God, the Maker and Ruler of all things ; that Jesus of Nazareth, His Son, was born of the flesh, was crucified, and “ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures ; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures ;” that He now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, as the Mediator and Intercessor between God and man ; that He will, at the last day, come thence and appear upon earth, as “ ordained of God,” to judge the living and the dead ; that, through faith in “ His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins ;” and that “ there is no other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” These doctrines, which underlie and form the basis of the whole Christian system, must be believed in common by the Church, and must be held in unwavering confidence, and with unswerving faithfulness, to the end. And so indeed must *all* the revealed *facts* of Christianity be believed by the whole community of the professed followers of Jesus, and be received in a spirit of meekness and submission, far removed from the spirit of doubt and fault-finding. The Christian can not deny any of these without denying the authority of the Scriptures. However

incomprehensible, therefore, some of these facts may be, however mysterious, however difficult to be understood or fathomed by the human mind, they are to be received, in all confidence, as the wisdom of God. And, if to the purblind eye of human Reason any of them may seem to be folly, as they did to the Greeks of old time, even these are to be accepted with as little hesitation as those which appear the simplest and most accordant with the preconceived ideas of the human understanding; because “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men;” for “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

“Be of the same mind one toward another,” the Apostle says to the brethren in Rome; a sentiment wholly correspondent with that uttered in my text, and one entirely accordant with the more full expression of the same idea, as found in another part of the Epistle to the Romans;

where, in the warmth of Christian affection, the same Apostle gives utterance to the pious ejaculation, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to Jesus Christ; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

When the Christian takes upon himself the vows of obedience to the Lord, he professes to have experienced a change of heart; by which he now regards as valueless what he once thought to be the main objects of pursuit in life, and now looks upon what he once despised as the only real good, the only source from which happiness, either in this life or in the life to come, can proceed. By means of this change—produced by the truth through the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the intellect and affections—he professes to have become a new man in Christ Jesus; and to have been made, by divine adoption, a member of the household of Christ. He is therefore renewed in his thoughts, in his desires, and in his hopes. Christ, once hated and rejected, is now loved and accepted as the only hope of salvation, as the only refuge of the sin-sick and weary soul; and the members of Christ's family, his fellow-believers in

the Gospel, whom he once shunned and regarded as fanatics, or deceivers, he now recognizes as brethren beloved in the Lord, as fellow-heirs of immortality, and joint-heirs together with him in Christ of the exceeding rich and glorious promises made by God in the Gospel of His blessed Son. His heart beats in unison with theirs: he has the same will, the same affections, the same desires, and the same objects in life. God has plucked him and them as brands from the fire of His burning vengeance, and has established their feet upon the eternal, immovable Rock of Ages. They and he, therefore, have a common source of rejoicing and gratitude. Together their songs of praise may rise to the throne of the Eternal; and together their prayers may be lifted to Him who has delivered them from the bondage of iniquity, and bestowed upon them mansions of glory in His own eternal habitation.

It is comforting to the soul to approach, in the midst of silence and retirement, when no eye but that of Jehovah is looking upon us, to His mercy-seat, there to pour out our heart to Him in thankfulness and adoration, and to feel the warm gushings of His Spirit welling in upon our souls and filling our senses with calmness, and peace, and

quiet joy in the Holy Ghost. This indeed is pleasure, and a foretaste of Heaven. But there is a joy, a comfort, which is often more joyous and more comforting than this. It is the rapture that fills kindred Christian minds, when, withdrawing from contact with the world, they retire into some holy place, apart from the noise and tumult of busy, bustling life, to hold converse and communion with their God. Here each relates to the other his sorrows and his trials, and receives the generous sympathy of Christian hearts: here each describes his joys, and hearing from each in turn the recital of his own, is encouraged and sustained in the prosecution of his journey to the land of everlasting bliss. Here are uttered our united prayers; and here are sung in common our song of thanksgiving to Him who has purchased us with His blood. This is the union of kindred souls. This is the brotherly love which passes the comprehension of the world. This is the affection which loses sight of self, and thinks only of the interest and happiness of others. This is love—the love of the angels, and the love of God. How delightful, how godlike, how soul-comforting, is this love, when, as the poet says—

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
 And with him bear a part;
 When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
 And joy from heart to heart.
 When, free from envy, scorn, and pride,
 Our wishes all above,
 Each can his brother's failings hide,
 And show a brother's love."

This is "to be like-minded one toward another according to Jesus Christ;" for this is what the Spirit of Christ and of His religion requires. The very essence of that religion is love: it was devised by love; by love it was sent upon the earth; by love it is sustained and kept alive in the world; and it worketh by love upon the hearts of its votaries. This is the union which Paul exhorts the Philippians to strive after, when he beseeches them in words that breathe the atmosphere of Heaven, "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye (fill ye up) my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord (breathing the same spirit), of one mind." For such a union, the professing Christian must ever struggle and strive, according as God has given him ability and grace. If he do not, he is no Christian; and he is not worthy so much as to

mention, or even to think upon, the holy name of Jesus. Christ was all alive with affection for men; and He has enjoined it as a sacred duty upon His followers, that they be like-minded with Him, that they copy after His example; that they take up their cross, and follow Him, who alone of all that have existed in human form is worthy to be imitated by the Christian.

Art thou a believer, and yet dost not love the brethren? Thine own confession condemneth thee; and by the words of thine own lips shalt thou be judged for the Apostle John declares, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him: That he who loveth God, loveth his brother also."

The love of the brethren, therefore, is a test of every man's Christianity; and is a proof, a sure and infallible proof, whether or not he has passed from death into life. For, though I speak with the tongue of an angel, and have not love, "I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and, though I have all faith, so that I could remove

mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." These are the words of an inspired Apostle; words written to the Church in Corinth, the same body of Christians to which the exhortation of the text was addressed. They prove that without love to the brethren—on which alone Church-union is based, and without which it is actually unattainable—it is impossible to please God, and, consequently, impossible to obtain the gift of everlasting life. He, however, on the other hand, who feels within the promptings of brotherly-affection, and who longs for the union which is founded upon it, carries with him, on his own bosom, the assurance of his acceptance with the Father and Lord of his spirit; for it is all true, and it is a reflection laden with heart-comfort to every believing spirit, that

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of Heaven that finds
His bosom glow with love."

"Be of one mind," saith the Apostle Paul, "be like-minded, having the same love," breathing

the same spirit. There is but one object of love for the Christian; and that is the Lord Jesus Christ, and they who, through Him, are, or may be, heirs of immortality. Our love to the brethren, and to humanity in every form, resolves itself at last into love to Christ; for it is *because* we love Christ that we feel kindly-affectioned toward the brethren; and it is *because* we love Christ that we are moved with compassion for all mankind, and would have them obtain a common interest with us in the blood of the atonement—Believers, therefore, are to “be of one mind” in Christ; to love only what He loved; to think that alone praiseworthy and honorable which He thought praiseworthy and honorable; to pursue only those aims and objects in life which He has enjoined upon His followers as consistent with their discipleship, and as alone worthy of the attention of the immortal soul.

The grand aim of the Christian’s life, is the working out of his soul’s salvation; and subordinate to this, yet most intimately connected with it, and indeed quite inseparable from it, the saving of the souls of his fellow-men. In this, the minds and hearts of the membership should be, and, if they are truly converted, *will* be *one*.

Here must they, if in nothing else, exhibit “the unity of the Spirit;” and move on, in one united band, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, under the banners of Immanuel. Why else should they have been chosen from the world, if they are not to labor, and strive, and agonize, and pray; working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and proclaiming to dying men, by word and by deed, the story of Jesus and the resurrection. Has God called them to supineness and inaction? Has He elected them to eternal life, and yet given them no part to perform in the world’s redemption? No! The Christian Church is the army of Jesus; and every one who comes into it, is a soldier under Christ, the Captain of his Salvation—a soldier enlisted not for a month, not for a year, but for life; and sworn by the most solemn of oaths to perpetual and unhesitating obedience. He has entered the grandest of all armies, and the service of the greatest of all kings; an army commissioned to conquer the world; an army whose solemn tread has been heard for centuries, as it has moved along in serried rank over provinces, and over the nations of the earth; whose columns are never thinned; and whose numbers are destined to go on in-

creasing until all upon earth shall have enlisted under its banners, and all Kingdoms and Empires, and Republics, and every government known among men, shall have been brought to subjection, and made to acknowledge their allegiance to its divine Commander.

Thus have I attempted to describe to you, what *it is to "be of one mind."* But there is a promise connected with the Apostle's exhortation; a promise, however, whose condition is that the Church do thus live in unity and concord. "*Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*"

Whenever we are conscious of having faithfully discharged our duty in any respect, we feel a pleasure in the thought; the mind is composed and happy. This is because our Conscience—that inward monitor of all our actions which never speaks falsely, unless corrupted by a bad education or by evil habits—approves us before the bar of our own judgment. The Christian mind feels under such circumstances, that it has the approval of its God; and, on this account, it experiences a sense of serenity and calm enjoyment which the man of the world can never know. God is present with believers

always, whenever they perform any duty; but they have here a special promise of the divine favor and the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit. God, who is the source of love and peace, as He is indeed of every blessing, will smile with peculiar favor upon those churches whose membership live in peace and are of one mind, joined together in the holy bonds of harmony and Christian affection.

It is only when the members of a Church are harmonious that they can make advances in the knowledge of God and of themselves. Discord introduces confusion, and frustrates every attempt on the part of the minister, or of the brethren among themselves, to communicate instruction in the things which pertain to the Kingdom of God; for these subjects, being spiritually discerned, can not be comprehended by minds that are filled with envy, and malice, and all wickedness. The soul that loves bickering and fault-finding, must grow lean in the knowledge of the Lord; and, instead of feeding upon the kernel of God's Word, will delight itself with the chaff of man's wisdom, and with the husks which the very swine would refuse. If we want knowledge in heavenly things, we must

cultivate a heavenly temper ; and then the gates of the garden of divine Wisdom will be thrown open to us, and our soul may enter and feast upon the substantial, Heaven-nurtured, and life-giving fruits of the celestial Paradise.

The Lord will be present to the harmonious Church, moreover, in speaking words of comfort and joy to its membership. They that have the love of each other burning warm in their hearts, are blessed by a special and peculiar presence of the Holy Spirit ; and this imparts to them a sense of joy, of freedom from the penalty of sin, and of acceptance with God and Christ, which beams forth in every word they utter, and lights up their countenance with an expression of gladness almost divine. Need I ask you, who are those that really enjoy religion ? Is it not those, and only those, who live up to their profession ; who amid the world are not of the world ; who have here no abiding-place, but “ seek a city whose Builder and Maker is God ? ” To know what the comforts of religion really are, we must walk worthy of our high vocation in Christ Jesus ; we must believe in heart, and not in name only ; we must live with Christ, and Death, and Heaven, and Hell, before our eyes,

and uppermost in our thoughts. From my heart I pity the man who believes in Christ, but who believes in Him rather as a judge who shall consign to punishment, than as a Saviour who has redeemed him from sin, and will receive him at last, and fold him forever to His affectionate heart. To him, feeling, as he does, that he is a professed believer merely, and not truly regenerated by the Spirit, the Gospel must be as "a savor of death unto death," and not of life unto life; and to him the promises of Christ, so pleasing to others, are only the stern threatenings of unappeased justice, and the roaring of that fire which shall consume the adversaries.

To the concordant and harmonious Church, still further, God shall be present in prospering the work of their hands, especially in building up the cause of the Redeemer. Think you that the Lord will grant to those Churches, and those brethren who live in unity, increase in divine knowledge and a comforting sense of His presence abiding in their hearts, and yet not prosper the work of their hands? I tell you, He *will* grant them the divine blessing and the divine assistance in all that they undertake—all, I say, that they undertake in accordance with His will

and their profession as Christians. We are commanded to be "not slothful in business." It is our duty to mingle in the world, and to take part in the business of the world. In so doing, moreover, we are to labor faithfully, and with all diligence; and whatsoever our hand findeth to do, that it must do with all its might. And God will prosper us in this labor, if, in so doing, we purpose not serving ourselves, but the Lord. In every lawful undertaking we may look for His blessing; "for," as the Psalmist sings, "the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

The harmonious Church will be favored of God in a peculiar manner, and with the richest blessings, in its efforts to bring men to a knowledge of the truth, and to proclaim the glad tidings of Salvation among all nations, and every people. Here, more than any where else, union is strength, and disorder is weakness. How is that Church prepared to enter into combat with the world whose armor is all battered and broken by internal conflicts, and which, instead of opposing a solid phalanx to the enemy, presents only a disordered array of ill-disciplined, half-armed,

fear-struck, soldiery? Is this the preparation which Paul enjoins upon us, when he says "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil?" No, *no!* The Church that is to make its mark upon the world, needs far other preparation than this. It must "*be of one mind*" and one soul: its members must stand shoulder to shoulder, firm and unshaken in their ranks; having on, each, the breast-plate of righteousness; having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, the helmet of Salvation on their heads; and the shield of Faith in one hand, and the sword of the Spirit in the other. Thus must they stand, strong in the power of unity, and in the might of their God.

When I look around among all Christians, and particularly among our own denomination, and see how little is done, and how much is left undone, from want of unity of heart and unity of action among the members of our Churches, my soul is disquieted within me; and I almost fear that the judgment of God has come upon us for our divisions, our contentions, our wranglings, our envyings, our disputings, our strifes. Just think of it. Here are 400,000 Baptists in the

South; a number sufficient, if divinely marshaled, to subdue the whole world to the mild and peaceful sway of the Redeemer. And what are they doing toward sustaining the Gospel at home, and toward sending it abroad into heathen lands? Nothing, almost nothing, I grieve to say, when their ability is taken into consideration. The Baptists of the South, it is computed, have an amount of capital, the yearly interest on which, at common rates, sums up the enormous figure of at least \$15,000,000. And of this yearly interest, they gave, last year, for the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen, the hard-begged sum of \$21,000; or about *one cent* in every *eight dollars* of the bare interest on their accumulated capital! We are doing better at home, it is true; but how miserly are our contributions even in this respect! Every where throughout the land the cry is, "Send us preachers;" and yet the preachers, when sent, are not supported. Every where throughout this great Valley, of which our city is the commercial emporium and the key, the cry is heard, especially in the cities and larger towns, "Build us churches, build us churches, or our cause will die." And it is true: the churches are needed, sadly

needed; and, without them, our denomination can never hope to flourish in the cities and towns of the Valley of the Mississippi. But why are they not built? It is because the membership of our Churches are not sufficiently harmonious; because they are not careful "to mind the same things," according to the Apostolic precept; and because there are divisions, and jealousies, and strifes, among them, preventing union and harmony of action in the cause of Christ.

My dear brethren, members of the First Baptist Church, and Baptists of New Orleans, let me say to you, in the words of the Apostle, "*Be of one mind.*" If there ever was a time in our history when union has been necessary, that time is *now*. Let us, therefore, seeing we have a mighty work before us, *Be of one accord, of one mind.*" You perceive your situation, brethren; that you are thrown by the providence of God in a city which is full of evil—a city "wholly given," I may say, "to idolatry;" that, therefore, it becomes you to labor with patience, with long-suffering, and with earnestness; looking, with hope not mingled with fear, for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Baptists of this city have undertaken a mighty enterprise. Let us see to it, brethren, that we carry it out faithfully, and quit us like Christian men. Oh, if we could have but *unity* among us—unity of sentiment, unity of feeling, unity of purpose—there is nothing which we might not undertake, and successfully carry into execution. There are enough Baptists in this city—if they would but unite, and contribute, as God has prospered them, of their means, their time, their efforts, and their prayers—not only to carry out, in New Orleans, every proper denominational enterprise, but to make an inroad upon Satan's kingdom in this city that would be felt and mourned throughout the length and breadth of his dark dominions. Brethren, let me beseech you, by your vows of fidelity to God, by your love to Christ, by your hope of glory, "*Be of one accord, of one mind*" in the Gospel. "Let nothing be done" among you "through strife or vain glory;" but let all be done for the honor and glory of our common Lord and Saviour. Form yourselves into a holy phalanx, firm, united, invincible; and move onward in one body, solid and unbroken, against the marshaled hosts of Satan in our city. *Move on*: you shall be con-

querors, and more than conquerors, in a battle more noble, and infinitely more honorable, than any civil conflict which the world has ever known. Move on in harmony. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life;" "that" you "may rejoice in the day of Christ, that" you "have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." The "God of love and peace" be with you all, now and evermore; Amen.

A P P E N D I X .

NOTE A.—PAGE 19.

REV. ISAAC TAYLOR HINTON, A.M., LATE PASTOR OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NEW ORLEANS.

ISAAC TAYLOR HINTON was born in Oxford, England, where he was educated, for the most part, by his father, Rev. James Hinton. At the age of twenty-two Mr. Hinton professed religion, and, soon after, he was licensed to preach the Gospel. Removing to London, he engaged with his brother in the printing business; and, while so employed, preached for several churches in the city and in its neighborhood. In 1830, he emigrated to this country, and settled in Philadelphia. In 1833, he went to Richmond, Va., to preach for the First Baptist Church; and, not long after, being ordained at its call, he was elected its pastor.

In 1835, Mr. Hinton accepted an invitation to the oversight of the Baptist Church in Chicago, Ill., which became, under his ministry, a strong and efficient body. From Chicago, he removed, in 1842, to St. Louis, Mo., to take charge of the Baptist Church in that city. Here he labored for three years with his wonted diligence and success; when, in 1845, at the earnest solicitations of those who felt the importance of the Baptist movement

in New Orleans, he accepted the call of the First Baptist Church to its pastorship.

From the beginning of 1845 until the middle of August, 1847, Mr. Hinton gave all his time and thoughts to the work of building up the Baptist Cause in our city. He was eminently fitted for the pressing duties of his station, and he discharged them with all faithfulness and diligence until the 24th of August, 1847, when he was attacked by the yellow fever, then prevailing. On the following Saturday, the 29th, just before eleven in the morning, he calmly breathed his last. His body was buried in one of the city cemeteries, but was afterward removed to St. Louis, where it now reposes in peace.

Mr. Hinton was a man of indomitable energy and untiring zeal, and, had he lived, he would, doubtless, have accomplished the object which brought him to our city. He felt that he had undertaken a mighty work, and his mind was occupied with the thought of its thorough and perfect performance. His whole heart was enlisted, and all the deep feelings of his soul. The Church prospered, and grew in numbers and in piety, under his life-inspiring ministrations. From feebleness it was being nurtured into strength, and promised to become a powerful element in the regeneration of the emporium of the South-West. When he died, there fell a good and great man in Israel.

Mr. Hinton had acquired reputation as an author. Before he left England, he aided his brother, Rev. John Howard Hinton, in preparing a valuable "History of the

United States," in two large, well-printed volumes. After settling in this country, he wrote a "History of Baptism" (1840), which has gone through several editions; and a work on the "Prophecies of Daniel and John" (1843). The "History" is an able performance, and the popularity it has attained is well merited.

The memory of Isaac Taylor Hinton will long live among the Baptists of New Orleans. He was called away in the midst of his labors—

"Called in the noon of conquest, fresh from fight,
With zeal undaunted, and with armor bright."

But his work was finished, his course was run. God took him early to his reward in Heaven; and, therefore, let us all say with her who wrote an Ode to his memory,

"Let grief be still, and hushed the note of pain;
His people's loss is his eternal gain."

NOTE B.—PAGE 68.

THE PLACE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF PETER'S DENIAL.

Upon the whole, I prefer that view which makes the denial of Peter to have occurred in the house of Caiaphas. The first three Evangelists seem so to represent it; but John would appear to locate it in the residence of Annas. The decision of the whole question turns upon the interpretation of John, xviii. 24, whether ἀπέστειλεν (*apesteilen*), the *aorist* in form, may there be rendered, as sometimes elsewhere (v. Matt. xiv. 3, 4, *et al.*), by the *pluperfect*. The Received Version so translates; though the Vulgate has, not *miserat*, but *misit*. Some critics will not admit the propriety of the pluperfect rendering, and they contend, with Neander, Olshausen, Meyer (second edition), and others, that the denial of Peter took place in the house of Annas. Other critics, however, of equal eminence, uphold the common translation (“*had sent*”); and, with Robinson, Tholuck, De Wette, Lücke, Winer, and others, make Caiaphas’s residence the scene of the occurrence. All things considered, I can not but regard this latter view the more correct. The mode of John’s narration gives to v. 24 a retrospective look; and the pluperfect rendering of the verb (ἀπέστειλεν) is further

favored by the fact that the *οἷν* (*oun*)—the “*now*” of the English Version—of the Textus Receptus, not being supported by sufficient MS. authority, is rejected by the best modern New Testament editors and Biblical critics. Some have solved the difficulty by assuming that Annas and Caiaphas were occupants of the same mansion. So does Euthyrius, among the ancients, and, among the moderns, Ebrard and Lange.

The representation which I have given of the circumstances attending Peter's temptation and fall, though written in an imaginative vein, is kept truthful to the facts of the history. One or two points, however, are doubtful. Thus, I have made John stay at the fire with Peter till after the first denial, and then leave the latter there alone. Only one Gospel speaks of John as present at Jesus's trial in the house of the high-priest—the Gospel written by himself; in which, with his usual modesty, he speaks of himself as “that other disciple.” If John lingered around the fire at all, he does not seem to have done so long. He probably went soon into the room in which the trial was conducted, and stood near to his Master. Knowing the high-priest personally, he could have easily obtained admittance. He may, however, have staid all the time in the court.

The order of the several denials is, in substance, that of “Robinson's Harmony,” which seems to me the most natural of all that have been proposed. The examination of Jesus was going on during the intervals between the separate denials. Other points explain themselves.

NOTE C.—PAGE 91.

PETER'S RELATION TO "THE CHURCH."

In the previous discourse, I speak of Peter having "received with special emphasis the Apostolic commission to regulate the affairs of the kingdom of Christ upon earth, being assured that upon him, as a rock, the Messiah would build His Church; and so, in this Sermon, I speak of his being "again charged," after his repentance, and after his renewed profession of love to Jesus (thrice repeated, as was his denial, John, xxi. 15-18), "with the oversight" of the Church of Christ. This power of regulation and this oversight he possessed in common with the rest of the Apostles (Matt. xviii. 18; John, xx. 23); though, there can be little doubt, he had a personal authority greater than that of any other man in the Apostolic college. He seems to have been the president of the college; but it can by no means be shown that he exercised a judicial power superior to that of others among the Apostles.

The primacy of Peter, as contended for by the Roman Church, is an idea foreign to the New Testament and to Apostolic antiquity. The notable text, Matt. xvi. 18, "Thou art Peter" (i. e., *Rock*), "and upon this rock" (*ἐν τῷ*

ταύτην ἐγὼ πείρω) "I will build My Church," must, it is true, be interpreted, for positive exegetical reasons, as referring to Peter *in person*, and not to *the confession which he makes*, as some, in violation of all grammatical usage, have contended; but the consequences deduced by the Romanists from this interpretation are altogether illegitimate. The language used by the Saviour is tropical—the metaphor being taken from the idea of a building. "The Church" is conceived of as *a house*, and Peter as *the foundation* on which it is to be constructed. Peter, then, was the *foundation* (the "rock") on which the Church was to be built; but so were the other Apostles (Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14); and so, in a yet higher sense, was Christ Himself (1 Cor. iii. 11; Eph. ii. 20). Historical facts show that the Church, that is, the "Church Visible," was built on Peter in a sense which is not true of the other Apostles, and which justified the expression of our Lord. He was made the honored instrument, on "the day of Pentecost," the beginning of the Apostolic development of the Church, of converting the first of the *Jewish* nation who joined the Church under the special dispensation of the Spirit (Acts, ii.); and he it was under whom the first *Gentile* converts were admitted to "the fellowship of the saints" (Acts, x). Thus was the prediction of Jesus fully accomplished.

This explanation of the words of Christ is equivalent to that of Neander, and coincides with that given by Angus in his "Christ our Life" (p. 205). It is to be borne in mind, however, that Peter is spoken of as the

foundation of the Church, *only in so far as he believed*; for, as Neander truthfully remarks, “there is indeed a personal reference to Peter, but only on account of the faith he had confessed, which formed the [spiritual] foundation of the Kingdom of God.”

NOTE D.—PAGE 92.

CHANGE IN PETER'S CHARACTER, AND HIS FATE.

After his fall and restoration, Peter became a changed man. His hasty zeal is tempered by sober dignity; and prudence, firmness of purpose, and patience, mark his after conduct. He became a Rock indeed, unshaken by trials, by hardships, by the prospect of immediate death. Note his boldness before the Sanhedrim (Acts, iv. 1-22); his calm resolution in the matter of Ananias and Sapphira (v. 1-11); his stern rebuke of Simon, who would have corrupted the Apostle with money (viii. 14-24); and his fortitude and self-endurance when thrown into prison by Herod Agrippa (xii. 3-19).

In accordance with the preponderating weight of testimony, I have represented Peter as dying a martyr's death in Rome. He probably suffered with Paul in the reign of Nero. He seems not to have resided long in Rome; and, certainly, it can never be proved that he was, at any time, bishop of the church in that city, as the Papists contend.

NOTE E.—PAGE 130.

THE PLAIN OF JERICHO, AND THE JORDAN.

The plain of Jericho was noted in ancient times for its fertility and the luxuriance of its vegetation. Josephus calls it a “divine region,” and speaks of its miles of gardens, and of its immense groves of the palm-tree. Here was produced the most famous balsam of the East, for the possession of which kings contended in angry war. The whole plain—especially the part which lay west of the Jordan—was cultivated to perfection. Jericho, “the city of the palms,” was here; and Jericho was only one of a hundred towns which flourished in the region. The palms are now gone, and the sycamores, and the trees from which the precious balsam was obtained. But there is still left a verdant strip of land on each side of the Jordan; and this shows what was the condition of the whole plain before the besom of desolation came and swept away its garden spots and its beautiful vegetation.

The trees and plants mentioned in the Discourse all grew, in the Saviour’s time, on the plain of Jericho, or upon the banks of the river in which He was baptized. Some of them are found no more, and some have declined in beauty and in vigor. The former fertility of

the whole region is proved by the effect of modern cultivation in other parts of Palestine. Grapes have lately been raised near Bethlehem, a single vine of which has on it one hundred clusters, "each three feet long, and each grape three and a half inches in circumference." Indian corn shoots up to eleven feet in height; water-melons weigh from twenty to forty pounds; quinces grow larger than the largest New England apples; and a single citron-tree yields five hundred pounds of fruit.

The Jordan flows through the middle of the Plain which has been described. The river courses its way from the Lake of Galilee and the Dead Sea—a direct distance of some sixty miles, but increased to two hundred by the windings of the stream—between two parallel terraces, which lie from three to six miles apart. From these terraces, which inclose what is known as the Valley of the Jordan, the land, on either side, keeps rising until it attains to mountains, the summits of which tower up three thousand feet into the air. The Jordan is usually from seventy-five to one hundred feet wide, and six to eight deep. It flows, in general, with great rapidity, leaping down frequent water-falls, or chafing furiously against its close-restraining banks. Near the end of its course, in the plain of Jericho, the river winds along with more gentle flow, "seeming," as Lieutenant Lynch remarks, "as if desirous to prolong its luxuriant meanderings in the calm and silent valley, and reluctant to pour its sweet and sacred waters into the accursed bosom of the bitter sea."

NOTE F.—PAGE 143.

PLACE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SAVIOUR'S BAPTISM.

Tradition points out the place where John baptized the Saviour. It is that indicated in the Sermon. The tradition is correct as to the general, if not the precise, locality. The spot was near Bethabara (better Bethany), which lay on the east side of the Jordan; the exact site of which, however, can not now be positively determined. The eminent geographer, Ritter, supposes Bethabara to have been the fords of the Jordan, opposite Jericho—the traditional locality of our Saviour's baptism; but Lücke thinks the town the same as the Beth-bara of Judges, vii. 24. As early as the time of Jerome, many believers repaired to the fords of Jericho, and were immersed "in the living stream" in which Jesus was baptized. Multitudes of pilgrims, in our day, resort thither every year, to dip themselves in the sacred waters. The season which they choose is the spring; when the river is usually turbid—of the color of gray slate—and flows with rapid current. Not unfrequently, bathers, venturing too far, are swept away and drowned. Spencer, in his Travels, thus describes his self-immersion "in a woody and

retired spot" of the river, which was "protected by the shade of the sycamore, the ilex, and the willow: "The associations of the place and the time were not without effect upon my mind. From the depth of my soul I blessed God for the privileges of His covenant, sealed to us by the holy sacrament of baptism; and I seemed to myself to be looking upon the solemn and touching scene of our Lord's baptism, by His messenger whom He sent to prepare the way before Him. Earnestly did I supplicate that God of His mercy would wash and purify my soul, body, and spirit, by the blood of Christ Jesus our Lord; and with the deepest reverence, remembering whom I was worshiping, I bowed my head beneath the waters of the Jordan three times, and pronounced each time the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the 'Triune God of our salvation."

The *time of the year* at which our Lord was baptized, I have assumed, with Robinson and others, to be the early part of autumn. Luke says that, when He received the rite, "He began to be about thirty years of age" (iii. 23.) Jesus was, as we gather from the same Evangelist's account (i. 26), some six months younger than the Fore-runner. If, then, John—as it is most probable—commenced his ministry at the age of thirty, and in the spring, the baptism of the Saviour must have taken place in the ensuing fall.

The Baptist is represented as meeting on the "*east side*" of the river, because "the place where John at first baptized," was near Bethabara (Bethany), "*beyond* the

Jordan." Jesus seems to have come from Galilee by "the eastern route" to Jerusalem—which ran, on the further side of the river, down the valley of the Jordan, to the ford opposite Jericho.

The *time* of the administration of the ordinance is assumed to be *the close of the day*; for then John was likely to be *alone*—which he seems to have been, when he performed the baptismal rite upon the Saviour. N. P. Willis, in his poem on the "Baptism of Jesus," makes the time, for the sake of the scenic effect, "near the flush of eve;" and speaks of "the wood" as "thick with the dim twilight, as they came up from the water." It is generally taken for granted that "a multitude was around" when our Lord received the ordinance. The probabilities, however, are against the supposition. The accounts in the Gospels do not represent the baptism as public. It was not necessary that any besides John should witness the ordinance; and the testimony given to the Messiahship of Jesus from Heaven, was only needful for the Baptist. It was unlike the character and the acts of our Lord—especially in the beginning of His ministry—to make an exhibition of the miraculous proof of His calling from the Father. Speaking of the baptism, and of its attendant miracle, some time after they had occurred, the Forerunner appears to relate the facts to his disciples as something unknown to them, and to the people. So the manner of the narration in John, i. 29–35, would seem to imply. Neander thinks that the Harbinger and Jesus were alone on the occasion. See his "Life of Christ,"

English translation, p. 69; and compare what is said by V. Rohden, in "Duncan's John the Baptist," p. 160.

An early tradition—which may be true—relates another circumstance as attending our Lord's baptism, not narrated in our Gospels. The Ebionite recension of the "Gospel of the Hebrews"—which Gospel was either the original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, or one based upon it—speaks of "a great light which shone around the place," after Jesus had received the ordinance. Hence, in the Sermon, I have ventured to represent the sky as flashing with "a rosy light of mellow splendor." Willis describes John and Jesus as "enveloped" in "a light bright as the tenfold glory of the sun, yet lambent as the softly burning stars." Justin Martyr moreover, says that as our Lord descended into the water, "a fire was kindled in the Jordan"—a representation like that given in the book styled "Prædicatio Pauli."

NOTE G.—PAGE 230.

SKETCH OF BAPTIST MOVEMENTS IN NEW ORLEANS.

As early as the winter of 1816-17, Baptist preaching was heard in the city of New Orleans. The minister was the Rev. James Raynoldson, who had been sent out by the Baptist Triennial Convention. Mr. Raynoldson preached in the "Long Room" of Mr. Cornelius Paulding, a Baptist of property, who had settled in New Orleans, about the year 1812. This room was the second story of a house, built by Mr. Paulding, in Dorsier street, just out of Canal, and fronting what was then the levee of the Mississippi. Here, for the first time in our city, was Baptist doctrine proclaimed by a minister of our denomination.

Mr. Raynoldson preached and taught school in this "Long Room." He formed a church organization, which he served for two or three years with faithfulness and zeal. This self-sacrificing pioneer had to contend with many difficulties and hardships; but he labored cheerfully, and not without success. He died in Louisiana, in 1848, after a long life of unrequited, yet not useless missionary toil.

About the time of Mr. Raynoldson's arrival, Rev. Mr. Hull set up the standard of Episcopalianism in New Orleans; and, not long after, Rev. Sylvester Larned—who died here in 1820—laid the foundation of Presbyterianism. The cause of both denominations has prospered. Each has now seven churches.

In March, 1817, Rev. Dr. W. B. Johnson, of South Carolina, visited our city for the sake of his health. He preached in the "Long Room," "to congregations respectable for numbers and attention." He discoursed also on board a ship; and, by special permission of Père Antoine, he preached a sermon for the benefit of the lately formed Poydras Female Orphan Asylum, in the Roman Catholic Cathedral.

After Mr. Raynoldson's departure, Rev. Mr. Davis took charge of the church. He preached at a brick building of Mr. Paulding, on Canal street, near the present site of Canal street. This church had, at one time, 16 white members and 32 colored. Mr. Davis left in 1820; and, in the end, his church dissolved. Before he left he performed a baptism in the Mississippi, in front of the Custom-house, now being wasted. The candidate—the first baptized in New Orleans—was Mr. Davidson, father-in-law of Alfred Hennen, Esq., of the city.

After the departure of Mr. Davis, Baptist preaching was heard here only occasionally, until 1826, when Rev. Wm. Rondeau arrived from England. Mr. Rondeau formed a new organization, preached about a year—first in the building already mentioned, on Canal street; then

in a school-house in "Paulding's Row," St. Charles street, and then in a building on the corner of Poydras and Tchoupitoulas street; after which he went northward, and finally settled in Kentucky. His church had, at one time, about twenty in its membership—two of whom himself had baptized; but, by the end of 1828, it was dissolved and scattered.

Not long after, Mr. Paulding fitted up a tobacco warehouse, in front of Lafayette Square, for the holding of worship, and here Baptist preaching was occasionally heard up to 1833, from Revs. Mr. Hurley, Mr. Courtland, and others. Soon, however, it was sold to the Presbyterians, and on the same site was erected, in 1835, the late edifice of the first Presbyterian Church of New Orleans.

About this time, Mr. Paulding constructed the large brick building on the corner of St. Charles and Hevia (Lafayette) streets—now known as the "Old Municipal Hall." The lower story was divided into dwelling apartments; the upper story was made a spacious Hall, to be devoted to the religious services of the Baptists. Rev. Pharcellus Church—now of Williamsburg, N. Y.—was invited to take charge of the interest. After having labored for some time amid very discouraging circumstances, Mr. Church took his departure for the North. He formed no church organization.

From this time (about 1834) there was no regularly authorized Baptist preaching in our city, till the coming of the Rev. Russell Holman, in the winter of 1842.

During this interval, Rev. Daniel Roberts ministered for some years, after a manner of his own, in Lafayette, now the Fourth District of New Orleans. Mr. Roberts was an eccentric but a pious man; and he did some good. Nothing permanent, however, was effected by his labors. Meanwhile, moreover, Mr. F. Clark commenced a church movement, in 1841, in Julia street, on his own responsibility; and this, under other auspices, might have been successful. As it was, however, it failed.

Rev. R. Holman, now of Alabama, labored under an appointment from the American Baptist Home Mission Society. No minister ever preached more faithfully in New Orleans; and to this day his memory is dear to those who knew him and his works of love. Mr. Holman organized the "First Baptist Church" of New Orleans, with eight male and four female members, the 28th of December, 1843; and this body was publicly recognized, early in 1844, as a regular Baptist Church, by Revs. H. Malcom, R. B. C. Howell, F. G. Keen, and R. Holman.

In the ensuing May, the Rev. Isaac F. Hinton, of St. Louis, was called to the pastorate of the Church, and Mr. Holman was appointed to collect funds abroad for a house of worship. Mr. Hinton came down in January, 1845, and took charge of the interest; then worshipping, as during the time of Mr. Holman, in the second story of a brick building in Julia street No. 66), opposite the foot of Foncher. The house still stands.

A lot of ground was soon bought for \$11,000, on St. Charles street, between Julia and St. Joseph; on which,

by February, 1846, a Lecture-room, costing \$4,000, was constructed. Measures were forthwith taken for the erection of the main edifice, which was to measure 84 by 63 feet. But all was frustrated by the death of Mr. Hinton, in August, 1847. A dark shadow then crept over the Baptist Cause in New Orleans; and only now, at length, is it fleeing away.

Since the death of Mr. Hinton, the First Church has had two pastors, Rev. Charles A. Raymond, now of South Carolina, was called 24th April, 1848, and resigned 1st December, 1849; and Rev. Leonard Fletcher, now of Kentucky, who was called 28th January, 1850, and resigned 8th April, 1851. Its pulpit was supplied for two months, in the winter of 1847-8, by Rev. T. G. Freeman; for about the same length of time, in the winter of 1849-50, by the Rev. Sereno Taylor, now of Mississippi; and from 1st January to 4th November, 1854, by Rev. W. C. Duncan. At other times, the services, which were kept up with only an occasional interruption, were conducted chiefly by the officers and members of the Church.

From the first, the greater number of receptions were by letter; but some entered by baptism. Mr. Holman baptized one; Mr. Hinton, eleven; Mr. Raymond, two; Mr. Fletcher, three; and Mr. Duncan, seven.

Mr. Paulding died 9th March, 1851, leaving to the Baptists the old Municipal Hall, already spoken of, in which Mr. Church had conducted worship. In the following June, the lot and Lecture-room of the First Church

were sold to pay off its remaining debt of some \$7,500. The sale seemed to be demanded; and, under the circumstances, was unavoidable. Since that time, the First Church has held its meetings in different places, last of all in the Hall of the "Carrollton Railroad Depôt." At present, it worships with the new church on "Coliseum place." It has some \$2,000—the relics of the sale of its St. Charles street property—which will, at a suitable time, be invested as the donors designed.

After the loss of the Lecture-room of the First Church, the Baptist cause sunk to its lowest ebb. Its condition from the summer of 1851, up to February, 1853, is portrayed in "Sermon I." of this volume. Early in the latter year, a new impulse was given to our denominational interests by the holding of the "Consultation Meeting" of the delegates from several Baptist State Conventions of the South.* It was "as life from the dead." Then were the measures first put in operation which led to the erection of the new edifice and the formation of the "Coliseum-place Baptist Church." Then, encouraged by the sympathy shown by the Baptists of the country, and by their promises of abundant help, the few brethren resident here ventured upon a most responsible undertaking—the building of a church that

* The delegation consisted of Rev. John E. Dawson, from Georgia; Rev. Dr. Baker, from Tennessee; Rev. T. G. Keen, from Alabama; Mr. W. M. Perkins, from Louisiana; Dr. W. L. Balfour from Mississippi; and Rev. T. F. Curtis, Cor. Sec. of the Dom. Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

would answer the wants of the denomination in New Orleans. Arrangements were at once begun, which, after many conferences with the executors of Mr. Paulding and others, were completed, in March, 1854, by the generous assumption, on the part of Mr. James H. Low, in behalf of the Baptists of the city and Baptists abroad, of the pecuniary responsibility arising from the erection of the proposed church edifice. He pledged himself, in a personal guarantee, for the denomination, that the building, as planned and commenced, should be carried right on to completion. The construction of the Church was forthwith commenced.

At the time of the "Consultation Meeting," in February, 1853, Rev. J. E. Dawson, of Georgia, was appointed to preach in New Orleans until the ensuing May; but, in about a month, illness compelled him to leave. Meetings were kept up by the brethren, reduced to two in number, at one time, during the epidemic of 1853, until, in the fall, they rented the depôt already mentioned. The present pastor of the "Coliseum-place Church" then took charge of the interest; being called the first Sunday in 1854, to the regular supply of the pulpit of the First Church. Though in an uncertain state of health, and holding at the time the professorship of Greek and Latin in the State University, he accepted. What occurred afterward, may be learned from the statements in the sermons.

The "Coliseum-place Baptist Church" was constituted, with five male and four female members, and publicly

recognized, Sunday evening, 9th July, 1854, in the Hall of the Carrollton Railroad Depôt, by Rev. I. T. Tichenor, of Alabama, and Rev. W. C. Duncan, of New Orleans. A new organization was required to secure the building then being erected on the corner of Camp and Basin (now Terpsichore) street, with the remaining funds of Mr. Paulding's donation (\$5,500 having been expended for the lot), combined with moneys raised by the Baptists in New Orleans and in the country.

The Church worshiped for the first time in the Lecture-room of its new edifice, on Sunday morning, 12th of November, 1854, the services being conducted by the present pastor. On Sunday morning, 6th of May, 1855, the opening services were held in the main audience-chamber above, which measures, exclusive of the deep pulpit recess, 91 by 60 feet in the clear. The membership had then nearly reached seventy.

The lot on which the "Coliseum-place Church" is erected, is centrally situated, and covers a surface of 128 by 96 feet. The building measures, including the tower, 127 by 62 feet. The walls run up 44 feet from the ground, and the spire is to rise to the height of 174 feet. The basement rooms are 12 feet high, and 53 feet is the measurement from the main floor above to the apex of the roof. There are 162 pews in the main audience-room, and 28 in the gallery, which runs across the front. There are no side galleries, and no pillars. The ceiling is open. The Lecture-room contains 77 pews. The church, when finished, will have cost, with its lot, \$50,000.

NOTE II.—PAGE 272.

REV. J. SIDNEY HAYS, LATE PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FOURTH DISTRICT, NEW ORLEANS.

MR. HAYS died of yellow fever, 26th August, 1855, after having labored some eighteen months in New Orleans, with a zeal, and energy, and love, which commended him to many hearts. At the time of his attack, he was filling the pulpits of three Presbyterian churches in the city. His age was about thirty years when he was called from earth.

Mr. Hays was a faithful and earnest preacher and a Christian gentleman. The numbers that attended his funeral attest the hold which he had on the affections of the people. He had a heart which beat in sympathy with that of every Christian man of whatever denomination. Kindness beamed forth from his face, and showed itself in his acts. The writer knew him, loved him, and trusts he shall meet him in heaven, where each shall rejoice in souls redeemed, through his labors, to Christ.

